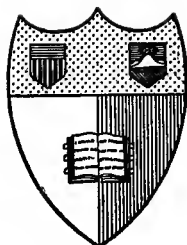


*The*  
HABIT *of* HEALTH

OLIVER HUCKEL



New York  
State College of Agriculture  
At Cornell University  
Ithaca, N. Y.

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**THE  
HABIT OF HEALTH**



# THE HABIT OF HEALTH

*HOW TO GAIN AND KEEP IT*

BY  
OLIVER HUCKEL

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## PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

OME twelve years ago a series of conferences was held at the Johns Hopkins Medical School, led by Dr. Oliver Huckel, then pastor of a leading church in Baltimore, and having for their purpose the closer cooperation between physicians and ministers in the work of healing. It was felt that there was a common meeting ground where religion and medicine working conjointly could accomplish vastly more than by following separate paths.

These talks were highly valued by the students who were privileged to listen to them. They were brought together in book form under the title of "Mental Medicine," with an introduction by Dr. Lewellys F. Barker, the successor to Dr. Osler in the Hopkins School, and the book has since attained a wide circulation.

Answering the many demands from readers for a book which would embody these invaluable suggestions in briefer form, the author has consented to issue this smaller

### *Publisher's Preface*

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volume, containing nine of its most vital studies. They will be found to present—not a criticism of any other creed or movement—but a broad-gauge plan for the unity of mind and body; the preservation of health by drawing upon those vast, untold reservoirs of spiritual power. The book is rightly called, “The Habit of Health.”

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## I. THE SPIRITUAL MASTERY OF THE BODY

HE spiritual mastery of the body, the force we call self-control, is not merely equipoise and mental equilibrium, but the dominance of the whole life by its highest power. It is not a discussion of theories, but a vital, practical fight, an earnest everyday striving for results. It is the mastery of the body for health and happiness.

How we love to see the dominance of mind in the world! How we love an invincible and dauntless spirit! How we admire even that pagan but courageous cry of the poet Henley:

“I am the master of my fate,  
I am the captain of my soul!”

We recognize the right of mind over body. It is both fundamental and natural. It is both reasonable and divine. Perhaps we ought to say, most divinely reasonable. For it is the right of the spiritual over the nat-

ural; the right of the eternal over the transitory. This body in a few years will crumble into dust, but mind is immortal,—the spirit will live on forever.

We need not discuss the definitions of mind or spirit, nor revive the old contentions between dichotomy and trichotomy, that is, whether we are body and mind merely, or body, mind and spirit. It will suffice for our present discussion to recognize the great distinction between body and that incorporeal part of us, which is the seat of intelligence, emotions and will—call it what we may—mind, spirit, soul.

When God said to man in the beginning, "Have dominion!" he said it to man as the highest of all his creations. And when, in this highest creation, the command again goes forth, "Have dominion!" it is surely to the highest part in man,—his mind, his soul, his divine spirit.

We acknowledge the supremacy among human things of the human reason, the divine soul. We see constantly the great achievements of intelligence in the world. We see the marvelous products of mental efforts,—in works of invention, the accomplishments of great purposes and construc-

tions, the achievements in literature, in science and art. We see the superb creations of human genius,—mind touched by the divine to its highest.

It has been taken generally for granted that while the wondrous powers of mind worked through the body and that the body must be kept in good condition for their working,—yet the body itself was largely independent of these powers and was not amenable to them in its own special workings. So that if the body was sick, it must be treated from without by external remedies, or by extraneous substances taken into the system.

The conclusion, however, in these days is irresistible, that the mind has great influence over the body, both in health and sickness, in more wonderful ways than we have sometimes dreamed. Some of this marvelous influence we have already noted.

Even more subtle than the mental influence on the bodily functions is the moral. This fact is coming into greater recognition as a scientific truth: the direct and intimate relations between sin and sickness, and between sickness and sin. Sometimes, in hereditary and other cases, it is sickness that is the cause of sin. But in most cases, and either

personally or by heredity, it is sin that produces sickness. "Disorders of the body often flow from moral disorders; sickness may be sometimes the direct precipitation of sin; disease is sometimes merely the dregs of depravity." Every case, of course, demands separate and careful diagnosis. Often it is the sins of the father or the grandfather visited upon the children. Sometimes it is sin against the laws of health in former generations. But nearly always, in its last analysis, ill-health has a very close relation to sin.

There is truth in what Matthew Arnold says in his book, "Literature and Dogma": "Medical science has never gauged,—never, perhaps, enough set itself to gauge, the intimate connection between moral fault and disease. To what extent, or in how many cases, what is called illness is due to moral springs having been used amiss, whether by being over-used, or by not being used sufficiently, we hardly know at all and we too little inquire. Certainly, it is due to this very much more than we commonly think; and the more it is due to this, the more do moral therapeutics rise in possibility and importance. The bringer of light and happiness, the calmer and pacifier and stimulator, is one of



the chiefest of doctors. Such a doctor was Jesus. Indications enough remain to show the line of the Master, His perceptions of the large part of moral cause in many kinds of disease and His method of addressing to this part His cure."

A thoughtful young physician said not long ago to a Christian minister: "I am sometimes disgusted with my work. I am expected to cure a man of disorders and diseases which may be largely the result of his evil appetites and passions, and then, without touching his soul, leave him to return again to wallow in his evil. All that I am doing, as I see it, is to undo the stern lessons whereby a man is taught, through suffering in the body, that he has sinned in the soul. I wish I could deliver him from the sin in his soul while I am delivering him from the suffering in his body."

Perhaps he puts the case too strongly; and yet, is there not a real truth in the feeling back of his words? Ought not even the ordinary physician be so familiar with the laws of mind and soul that he could suggest the secret causes and prescribe rational methods for their treatment? Many physicians are already doing this very thing with

most helpful results. The inculcation, the inoculation of spiritual life, is a step higher than mental faith, and can be made most fruitful in therapeutic results.

And we ministers, if I may speak a word for my own profession, hail every real student in science, and especially every well-educated medical man, as our ally and fellow-worker in bringing in the kingdom of spiritual sanity and wholeness. As one thinker has well put it: "The healing of the body and the healing of the soul are different aspects of one and the same mystery of regeneration."

The chief value and strength of this new thought is the emphasis that it places upon cheerfulness, hopefulness and a perpetual and persistent optimism. It believes in God, it believes in Christ the active ideal in all things divinest; it believes in the Holy Spirit of encompassing love—and these are the great truths of life. It joyously emphasizes the health of God's countenance and what that belief may effect in the personal life. Many of us are persuaded that such a view will help to bring us all to a better frame of mind, to a healthier tone in religious life, to a more vigorous, a more militant faith in God and a

less passive acquiescence in sickness and sin. And, therefore, for our everyday and ordinary life, whether we are sick or well, we call upon you to consider such specific things as these that follow, for such things as these make better conditions, both mental and physical. They tone up the system, help to give Nature a chance, cordially co-operate with all the medical care and treatment that may be given to you.

Thought-life is real life. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Thoughts are deeds. Thought is potential in both spirit and body.

What is referred to is the thinking that is the usual and habitual atmosphere of your mind. It means the thoughts which you constantly entertain, the thoughts in which you dwell, your habit of thought, your spirit of life, your views, your secret convictions and ambitions, your controlling ideals. These thoughts that take hold of a man's inmost life, and are the things that represent his own secret inner world—known only to himself and God. Such thoughts are *you*—your real vital self—the self that has the influence on your life and other lives.

This is the tremendous truth—being is

more important than doing. What you are is vastly more important than what you say or do. What you are is your thought, your affections—that whole inner, vital, palpitating life that is dominated by your mind.

Therefore, you have the duty and responsibility of right mental habits. Many of the ills of life are due to wrong thinking, to evil mental habits, and to the careless allowance of unwholesome mental moods. Sometimes you may imagine that you may think what you please if you do not allow the thoughts to escape into words or crystallize into deeds. But have you full liberty within the brain? Can you indulge yourself with impunity there? You do so at great peril. You can no more be careless of the inner life than of the outer. More careful must you be of the inner, for it is the source and fountain of the outer life. Therefore, be careful what sort of books you read, be careful as to your companions and associations. Beware of anything that breeds doubt, evil thoughts, ignoble desires and false ambitions. Cultivate everything that breeds nobleness in the soul. The Master holds us responsible in the spirit of our lives. These thoughts of ours are innocent or guilty before God. Your

thought counts, and counts vastly. Your thought is you.

This is not merely important in a spiritual way—it is also vastly important in a physical way that we should be pure-minded and healthy-minded in our thinking.

We are fully responsible for the thoughts we entertain. We are not responsible for the random thoughts that come flitting in and out, but the thoughts that we hold and dwell on. We are not always responsible for random thoughts, but we are for the thoughts we cherish. As a quaint old writer once said: "We cannot help the birds flying over our heads, but we can prevent them building nests in our hair."

Paul recognized that we could control our thought. This is what that sacred teaching to the Philippians meant when it said: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things."

Further, you have the duty of asserting your potentialities. You are made for health and happiness. Never forget it. You were

created as a child of God. Live up to your birthright. You are in God's thought and love a nobler being than you are living at present—you have a greater power than you are exercising, you can render a fuller service to yourself and humanity and God than you have as yet dreamed. The thoughts of your heart make the deeds of your life. Our thoughts do not end with the thinking. Thought is power, and has its issue in reality. Every thought leaves its impress within as without. Every thought leaves its indelible record within. "I am a part of all that I have met," Tennyson wrote in his *Ulysses*. And all that we have thought also becomes a part of us. Every evil thought degrades us and stains and scars the fiber of our soul. But every good thought is a new strength and blessing to the soul. A noble soul is built up of noble thoughts.

There is no limit to the effect of good thinking, when it is backed by your will and crowned by the grace of God. Can it restore to health? It can, in many instances, and it can do greater things.

You have the duty and responsibility of realizing that your spirit is made for conquest, because it is in loving fellowship with

the divine spirit. We do not half realize our powers. When we are leagued with God, all things are possible. We can be more than conquerors, when we are leagued with God. By a covenant of consecration and faith, we are taking hold of the sources of omnipotence.

Most marvelous work has been accomplished in this world by those who in the power of God have lived their lives and have done their deeds. The supreme mind in this world is the mind of Christ. And yet—listen to this appeal: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." These are audacious words, but they express a great truth and a living possibility. Something of that mind which was in Christ Jesus, you may have, if you ask God for it—so that you may think some of His great thoughts after Him. The mind of Jesus was purity, humility, nobility, divinity. The mind of Jesus was wise with a heavenly wisdom and warm with a divine love.

Let a man think in the spirit of Jesus, let a man speak in the spirit of Jesus, let a man live in the spirit of Jesus and that man is a victor over the body.

A man who has the ideal of Jesus dwelling

in his thoughts continually, will have there the inspiration of the noblest living. His thoughts cannot dwell in that atmosphere of goodness, without, by very contagion, becoming infected with divine ambition. His love can transform the heart; His ideals can inspire the mind and life until we, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, shall be gradually transformed into the same image, even from glory to glory.

Such a mind, divine and dominant in us, will accomplish God's purpose in us and by us. It will undoubtedly help us in our fight for physical health and it will be a conquering power in our fight for spiritual health. This gives the invincible spirit, this gives the note of absolute conquest in all things—the sense of eternal union with the love of God from which nothing can separate us.



## II. FAITH AS A VITAL FORCE

**F**AITH and prayer are often considered merely as spiritual factors. We want to show in this address that they have also physical and therapeutic value.

There is a great deal in that phrase that Tolstoi uses in one of his books—"Faith is the force of life." For, in fact, faith is more than spiritual imagination or spiritual comprehension. It is a vital energy. It is not merely the power that relates the finite to the infinite, that bridges the gulf between the seen and the unseen, but it is a stimulus to all the latent faculties of life. It is as large and as real a factor in our lives as reason, or will, or the affections. It is a basal principle of life, and we ought to recognize it as such.

Every modern physician uses more or less of faith in his practice. It is a necessary part of his work—as important as his drugs. He must inspire faith and confidence, in his patients; otherwise his service is not effect-

ive. If a patient have faith in his doctor, the medicine does more good; in truth, if the patient have strong faith in the doctor, the cure is sometimes effected without medicine. Some medicines and treatment, as given by great physicians in whom people have faith, may have no effect when administered in the identical way by another physician who has no faith in himself and in whom his patient has no faith.

All the various modern cults of healing—faith cure, mental healing, so-called Christian Science, and the more recent Emmanuel Movement, emphasize faith, and rightly so, as a prime necessity in their work. Some, however, depend on faith entirely and in most illogical and indiscriminating ways; others, such as the Emmanuel Movement, in a more sensible and rational way.

We may recall the historical fact that the early church continued for some time the apostolic work of healing, and its practice consisted largely of faith and prayer. It is an interesting chapter in the history of the church as recorded in fragmentary pages of early Christian literature.

It is refreshing to find the modern church coming back again to a realization that it has

a certain part, at least, in helping both the souls and bodies of men, and in understanding that its mission is not to disembodied spirits, but to the whole life in the body.

We recognize that in material affairs, as in spiritual, the man with faith is the man who brings about results. "Faith," as one says, "is behind the great achievements of our modern life. Faith is the keystone of success. Without faith we do the work of life with lagging hearts. With it our powers are at their best. Chronic doubt kills effort and cripples its powers. But faith—not credulity, not rashness—but honest, constructive faith which realizes by action that 'assurance of things hoped for,'—such a force will carry us over mountains of difficulty and leave us fresh for the next climb."

Faith is thus a daily principle in business and in social life. We must have faith in our fellows to some large extent, or business stops, and social life becomes a mockery. Faith is also a principle which is used in science. We think of science as based on knowledge. So it is. It goes usually only as far as the five senses take it, and yet it believes further than it sees. It has never actually seen the essence of life, only

its manifestations in electricity or the other energies. But it has faith in these, so that the whole universe becomes intelligent and understandable.

Faith is, of course, a chief principle in religion and it gives the basis of action there. Doubt paralyzes, but faith gives the vital touch of reality and is the means of progress toward all higher things.

Now extend this same principle into the therapeutic field. As a matter of fact, it is being more and more recognized that in all mental and spiritual methods of dealing with disease, faith is a powerful factor. "After all," as Dr. Osler says, "faith is a great leveler of life. Without it, man can do nothing; with it, even with a fragment, as a grain of mustard seed, all things are possible to him. Faith in us, faith in our drugs and methods, is the great stock in trade of the profession. . . . It is the aurum potabile, the touchstone of success in medicine. As Galen says, 'Confidence and hope do more good than physic.' He cures most in whom most are confident."

But in this special work it may be asked: What kind of faith is needed for the therapeutic work? And we may answer that it is

not a superstitious faith that is needed, nothing blind, arbitrary or unreasoning; nor a theological faith or creed. Indeed, people of widely different creeds, and of no creed, are equally helped in this movement. Nor is it a stultifying faith, believing without evidence and affirming belief of what, in your inmost soul, you are not persuaded. Instead it is a simple, reasonable, fundamental faith—an attitude of life and soul which means reverence, willingness, obedience. That is enough to begin with, and it will increase. It means such a faith as this :

1. Faith in God's love and His loving purpose towards us. For God is love, life, health. He wills health for us. He helps us to health, as far as we allow Him. He is opposed to pain and disease and abnormality, as He is opposed to vice and sin.

2. Faith in the healing power of Nature (which is another name for God). Nature is always seeking to heal us. Take away the barriers; give Nature a chance and she will heal.

3. Faith in ourselves when our wills and energies are stimulated, strengthened, and energized by God's grace. We must stir up the gift that is in us. The power is often

latent. It needs the stimulus of new exertion; it needs re-education.

Such a faith is deeper and larger than belief. Belief is accepting a thing by our reason. Faith is accepting by our whole life—involving consecration and obedience. Belief only needs the mind; faith needs mind, affections, will,—the whole being.

As a matter of fact, we do not need many definite beliefs for therapeutic help; but we do need this firm and abiding faith in God and His love, and His gracious purposes, and our own power of response to Him.

A recent writer has said: "A great deal of alleged physical suffering is primarily mental. A great many people have 'fixed ideas' of disease, pain, debility, fatigue, dread, inefficiency, and inexpressible woes. Much oftener than we realize, these can be transplanted without surgery or medication. I do not mean that they are not real suffering. They are as real as the grave. But they are not grounded in physical infirmity, and they are not to be cured by physic. The mind becomes possessed of a conviction that a certain part of the body is infirm, and imputes pain to that part in spite of all the medicine in the world. Hundreds of people refuse to get

well after the physician has cured them. It is not his fault, and it is not their fault; they have simply had disease suggested to them until they cannot think at all except upon that assumption." \*

And for such conditions, the stimulus of a new faith, and the re-education of the whole mental outlook are needed. As Dr. Lewellys F. Barker says: "The patient afflicted with a so-called 'functional' nervous disorder must, it is true, believe in his physician, but the physician's task is to re-educate the patient to believe in himself. More than half the ills of one class of nervous patients depend upon a loss of confidence in their own ability, upon a sense of past failure and of future impotency. They have tried to do things outside their powers, and, having failed, have become convinced that they cannot in any way be efficient. Their minds are concentrated upon their failures and their disabilities instead of upon their successes. It is necessary to teach them how again to become confident and self-reliant; by assigning to them small tasks, well within their powers, and proving to them that they are capable of overcoming difficulty after difficulty. Many

\* Max Eastman in *Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1901.

may soon be taught to count victories where formerly every effort spelled defeat."\*

This is the interesting point. Modern science, as expressed in the fullest studies in physiology and psychology, also emphasizes this same need of faith. Physiology shows the wonderful power of faith in its action on the bodily functions and organs. Fear, for example, can distort and retard nerves and functions and upset the whole life. Faith can steady and stimulate and harmonize the whole life—the nerves and all the bodily functions. Psychology similarly in all its studies shows how faith can stimulate and transform mental moods and awaken latent energies.

We see, therefore, that the principle that the Master used in His work, both in healing the body and in healing the soul—the fundamental principle of faith as a prime necessity of healing, is the very one that it has been found necessary to use all through the centuries, whenever healing work has been done. The same thing holds true to-day.

We see also the reason for it. The Master was using no arbitrary methods, but spiritual laws, divinely written by God in our very

\* Introd. to Prof. Oppenheim's *Letters on Psychotherapeutics*.



being. In order to accomplish similar results, we also must use these same laws, so far as we can, and come back to the very first principles of the method of the Master. We are getting to fundamental ground as we follow Him, who was and is the Great Physician of the Body and Soul.

“Faith,” as Bishop Fallows says, “is a dynamic power within the soul itself. It springs from the innermost nature. It can be reinforced and strengthened from without, but must ever originate from within. In the healing of the mind or body, the energy exerted by the patient himself upon himself is of the utmost importance. It must begin with the belief that he can be helped. He may say, ‘I have no faith,’ when he seeks relief, but the very fact that he seeks it is the clear indication that he has some faith. According to the measure of his faith will be the corresponding good.”

Faith is essential. The patient cannot merely sit down and wait and be healed. In mental medicine, he has something to do, and a great deal. He must exert himself; he must have faith and obey. If a man would have help along these lines, he must give up the doubting mood, and come in the eager and

expectant mood, hoping for good. He must give up the critical mood, captious of everything that is said or done, and come in the hospitable mood, keeping mind and heart open. He must give up the selfish mood, thinking only of self and his troubles, and let his thoughts go out to others, sympathizing with them, and hoping and praying for them. He must stop thinking merely of the body, and come into thoughts of the soul, of the divine life, of God and His loving purposes.

Christianity in the largest sense is health, spiritual, mental, physical. Holiness and wholesomeness are from the same roots in etymology and in divine sources. The words that John writes in his third epistle are suggestive: "Brethren, I desire above all things that thou shalt prosper, and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

Men must be taught to exorcise and cast out the demons of fear, fret, weakness and worry. Such things are altogether evil and antagonistic to the best Christian life. People must be taught not to give up to sickness but to resist it, just as they resist sin, and they must avoid temptations to sickness, as they would avoid temptations to sin.

The church is beginning to protest against

ailments forming the bulk of conversation when the subject of the weather gives out. The church ought to protest against the luxury of grief in which some indulge with loss of interest in life and neglect of duties.

The church ought to protest against worry and fret. John Wesley wrote in one of his journals: "I would as soon curse and swear as worry. It is doubting God." We ought to have more of pure, strong, simple, brave Christianity, with apostolic joyousness and apostolic power! We ought to have the joyous early Christian mood of the disciples with our faces perpetually to the sunshine!

What we need in our churches is a more virile belief and practice. There is a place for the passive virtues and for quiescent faith and for gentle acquiescence, but it must not predominate nor monopolize. Religion is in danger of being emasculated by resignation. We need more of the spirit of resistance,—resistance unto blood. We need a manlier type of thought. We need a sturdier emphasis on the stronger, more vigorous, and healthier elements. The gospel is not weakness, but power; not sickness, but health; not weeping, but laughter and shoutings. We need to feel with Sidney


Lanier: "My Lord is large; my Lord is strong."

What is called "religious experience" has very close relations with the whole life,—spiritual, mental and physical. It is the progressive awakening to the consciousness of God with us, of His wondrous power encompassing us and uplifting us. There is a profound philosophy in it. It is the process by which a man gets a new point of view, new ideals, a new allegiance for the life. It takes us away from self, from doubts, from symptoms. It puts before us an image of purity and power, of holiness and health. It calls us with all the love of our heart and all the strength of our soul to be like the Master in His life and spirit. It gives us a living ideal—God's own perfect ideal for us. The ideals that we create in our own minds may be weak, wrong, imperfect, inadequate. But here is the finest and noblest that human heart can conceive, and that divine love can offer.

Here we are at the fountain head. We are at the source of life and strength. God created; God can renew. We can become increasingly one with Him and it will mean infinitely to us, both in holiness and health.

A serene spirit, a quiet heart, and a confident faith in God, are substantial helps to the preservation or restoration of that mental equipoise which must always come before physical equilibrium is assured.

### III. THE HEALING VALUE OF PRAYER

HESE thoughts on faith, as a vital force, lead naturally to a consideration of an allied subject,—the therapeutic value of prayer. In his "Varieties of Religious Experience," Professor James says: "As regards prayer for the sick, if any medical fact can be considered to stand firm, it is that in certain environments, prayer may contribute to recovery, and should be encouraged as a therapeutic measure."

There are many to whom prayer in these days is a perplexity, rather than a joy and a strength. It is so often kept down on a low level as a mere business transaction between God and us, that all its deeper philosophy is left to seem unreasonable and its divinest meaning is made obscure. Yet prayer is the supreme experience in human life. We are indebted to science for clearing away much that is unreasonable in the modern thought of prayer, and also for reassuring us of the

scientific facts and analogies of the seeming miracles that can be wrought by intelligence in ordinary life, and which point, as we shall show later, to a Supreme Intelligence that works in His universe, and gives us by a thousand manifestations the assurance that "more things are wrought by prayer, than this world dreams of."

The greatest power of prayer, however, is not in its possible answers in the material realm, nor in awful times of special emergency. Its greatest power is in bringing us continually into soothing and strengthening contact with the divine, that our wills may be brought into harmony with God, and that there may come into our souls new strength for accomplishing God's work by our own heart and hands. Prayer is communion, privilege, companionship.

There are many speculative difficulties in the subject of prayer, if we chose to consider them, and especially when we view prayer on its material side. It would seem as if the acceptance of natural law were full of questionings and invincible arguments against the material response to prayer. But the philosophy of prayer cannot be discussed by mere logic-chopping. Prayer is the supremest ex-

perience in the human life; it is "the stoop of the soul that upraises it, too"; and its deepest philosophy has never been fathomed, nor ever can be, by the scientific method or the logic of pure reason.

We cannot restrict the possible power of prayer, even in the way of material response. It may help us on this point to remember that this universe is not a machine, set in motion under fixed laws and left to itself. There is a supreme living personality in this world,—God in His world, working out His purposes toward "one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves,"—and what we call natural laws, are merely His customary modes of action. He is not a prisoner in the chains of His own laws; He is supreme even in natural laws. And a supreme intelligence, if it will, can so use these laws as to bring about results that of themselves would not occur. And He does.

You have noticed sometimes what effect mere human intelligence has in so using natural laws to bring about new results. Electricity, for instance, is a natural agent under natural laws, and in itself is useless, or means lightning and destruction. But man modifies these natural forces, he adapts them



to a purpose, and the electricity serves him and does his bidding over land and under seas. It runs to the farthest parts of earth with his messages. "In forty minutes, it circles the globe." It lights his streets, it drives his engines, it even cures his diseases. Man has not changed a single natural law, but by adapting these forces under these laws, he has made them serve a new purpose. Cannot God do this, as man has done, and even on a larger scale?

Ordinary sunlight, to give another illustration, has its natural laws, and man cannot change them. But he can so modify and use them, that what sunlight would not do without the cunning mind of man, now it will do, and will paint for him lifelike pictures in black and white, and even in colors. Has a miracle been wrought by the process of photography? No natural law has been changed, but intelligence has so controlled natural law that a new purpose has been wrought and a new thing accomplished.

Perchance you may wake in the morning with a sore throat. You have been careless or negligent, and have caught cold, and natural law is at work. If nothing is done, natural law may take its course, and the

cold may develop into something worse. But immediately you set about to modify the natural process of law by bringing into operation other natural laws. You apply counter-irritants or other remedies, and before the day is over intelligent action has conquered and the disease has been averted. Natural law has been used in new ways by other natural laws through human intelligence and action. Cannot Divine Intelligence do the same and greater? And in these ways, God does work.

If we did not understand these everyday things that we mention, we might call them miraculous, but since we understand them, we say it is intelligence at work. May it not be that results which we may call miraculous are wrought for us by God merely through the infinite and all-wise action of a Supreme Intelligence,—and results that, without prayer, might not have come to pass?

In all these things, let us remember that no prayer is answered unless the man who prays works with God toward its answer. That petition that we pray every day, "Give us this day our daily bread," amounts to nothing if the man prays it and sits down to eat with folded arms. If the prayer means anything,

it means that the man is willing to work with God to effect the answer.

Prayer must not in the least be allowed to take the place of human effort and responsibility. If a great battle is at stake, we must pray earnestly to the God of Battles, but keep our powder dry. If our house is on fire, we must not kneel down and pray, but pray as we run with the water-buckets. If we want a good harvest, we must pray, but be sure of our grain and the right sowing-time. If we want business success, we must pray, but also work with all our might. God has not given us the privilege of prayer in order to cut the nerve of effort or to put a premium on indolence. Therefore, in the same way, if we pray for health, we must use every sensible and legitimate method to secure it, and we must be willing to fulfill the conditions and laws of health, so far as we know, or our prayer is not a true prayer.

Another thing must be considered. No prayer is answered by what we call miracle, where natural means and natural laws are sufficient for the answer. God respects the eternal laws that He has made—His own best ways—and He will not controvert them. It is futile to expect it. But times may occur

in the divine economy of the ages, when prayer is answered by what seems to us a miracle, although it is but the natural law of God. But the notion in some minds that God is all the time playing fast and loose with His own laws in order to gratify the prayers of His children seems presumptuous and preposterous.

Would we have it, forsooth, that, for our own wish or convenience or the working out of our plans, God should reverse His laws? True it is, as we said, that God knows His own laws—that He can modify at His wisdom everything but the essential ethical laws of His own being. But is it not the more reasonable to suppose that in most cases prayer merely brings about new results through these same laws of God, and leads us unto fuller harmony with God, fuller obedience to His laws, and hence conquest in them. No natural law is controverted under ordinary circumstances in answer to prayer. But natural law is used by divine intelligence, or we are so inspired, as to effect new results.

In a word, then, while we may hold that no prayer changes any law of God, or natural law, nor alters God's will—we also hold

that every honest prayer is answered, and that every honest prayer has in it not only longing and desire, but a willingness to work with God toward the answer of the prayer.

Thus far, however, we have been considering what we may call the ordinary or the lower aspects of prayer. They are important, and we have dwelt on them in some measure in order to bring into contrast the higher meaning of prayer. This greatest power of prayer is the power that it has of bringing us continually into such soothing and strengthening contact with the divine that our wills are brought into harmony with God, and there comes into our souls new strength for accomplishing God's work by our own hearts and hands. In this fact is also found the special and greatest therapeutic value of prayer, as we come into this higher meaning—beyond petition into communion.

As an eminent writer has put it: "Prayer has a regenerating and uplifting effect on character; but in affecting character it must also affect the nervous system. It does not seem irrational to believe that prayer opens the inner consciousness to the absorption of spiritual energy. This attitude of receptivity

toward the higher things in turn affects life and character and the calmed and purified spirit acts on the nervous organization, restoring its tone and rhythm."

Now in all our thought of prayer, remember that we stand to God, not externally, not as distantly calling some far-off Being. "It is not," as one says, "like calling up a person by a long-distance 'phone and then waiting for material gifts." But we must remember that in God we live and move and have our being—"we are organically related to God, we exist in Him spiritually as thoughts exist in our minds." And when we pray sincerely and earnestly, our prayer arises to God as a thought arises in our minds. Such a thought sometimes takes possession of us. So real prayer may take possession of us. A real prayer may also take possession of God and bring blessing.

Tennyson saw this higher meaning of prayer when he said: "Prayer is like opening a sluice between the great ocean and our little channels when the great sea gathers itself together and flows in at full tide."

It is often the case that those nervously afflicted cannot put their prayer into words. They cannot command their thoughts or

words as they wish. For these, it is most helpful oftentimes, if they follow a form of prayer,—simple, definite, uplifting.

But it is not always necessary that prayer should be in words. Just the attitude of communion and trust is often the most helpful and uplifting. It is the prayer of silence and trust. It is just going into a quiet spot and waiting on God. It is the way of the Mystics, the Quietists, the Friends. But it is a good way. As the Scriptures say: "Be still and know that I am God."

"One of the most beautiful forms of auto-suggestion," as Bishop Fallows points out, "is prayer. Not that auto-suggestion is the whole of prayer. It is rather our preparation for the effects of prayer. Through its use we push away for a time from ourselves the engrossing preoccupation that shuts out higher interests, we open, as it were, a hidden door in our consciousness through which come new life and power and energy from God."

Such a practice as this—silent waiting before God for half an hour a day in the quiet—relaxed, passive, but with the windows of the soul open, will be oftentimes most helpful to the nervous sufferer. It helps to pro-

duce that quiet and serenity of spirit that is most desired. It opens in some mystic but real way, an actual connection between the soul and uplifting spiritual forces. Prayer, in this way, passively and without words, but full of thanksgiving and trust in God, brings new strength and help.

Prayer before sleep has distinct therapeutic value. The mechanism of sleep is unknown, but it is more than the cessation of consciousness. Many beneficial physical changes take place during sleep. Waste is repaired; functions reorganized. Often a ten minute nap is a tonic and a medicine, better than food or drink; renewing the mental and physical life. Sleep is largely a matter of suggestion, inhibition and control. Very important upon sleep and dreams and the deepest life are the last thoughts before going to sleep at night. Here is the value of prayer, when used just before sleeping. It is a scientific, physical help as well as spiritual.

"The fundamental religious point," as a noted psychologist says, "is that in prayer spiritual energy, which would otherwise slumber, does become active, and spiritual work of some kind is really effected. This



means, not only that prayer makes us better men and women, but that the spiritual energy which it brings may be translated into acts which give us more force as working beings, more power of achievement, more influence in the social order."

The therapeutic value of prayer may thus be considered as resting fundamentally in these facts:

1. Prayer brings the mind into a quiet and trustful attitude, and this reacts on the body.
2. Prayer is the continually hopeful spirit and this helps physical condition.
3. Prayer stimulates us to help ourselves to co-operate in the answer to prayer.
4. Prayer is sometimes directly answered in physical healing.
5. Prayer unites the human forces to the divine forces.
6. Prayer is the opening of the sluices of the soul for the divine inflowing.
7. Prayer is the atmosphere in which the divine Spirit of life lives and works.

In view of all this, it were folly to tell people that it is their duty to pray. Duty is too cold a word. Privilege and glory are the only words to connect with prayer. It is possible, however, that, through the first

impulse of duty, a way may be made into the sanctuary of privilege.

Those who know what prayer means find in it joyous companionship in solitude; it means genial sympathy in the recoil from the coldness of life; it means the delicious satisfaction of thought and feeling in the loving closeness of a living presence. More than that, prayer means the uplifting of the heart and mind into a higher atmosphere, into the living communion with the divine life and love.

A remarkable declaration and confirmation of this position concerning the value of prayer as a means to mental health, is that of Dr. Murray Hyslop, physician superintendent of the Royal Hospitals, Bridewell and Bethlehem, in London: "As an alienist and one whose whole life has been concerned with the sufferings of the human mind," he says, "I would state that of all the hygienic measures to counteract disturbed sleep, depression of spirits, and all the miserable sequels of a distressed mind, I would undoubtedly give the first place to the simple habit of prayer. Let there be but a habit of nightly communion, not as a mendicant, nor repeater of words, but as an humble individual who sub-

merges or asserts his individuality as an integral part of a greater whole. Such a habit does more to cleanse the spirit and strengthen the soul to overcome mere incidental emotionalism than any other therapeutic agent known to me."

One who has found the secret of prayer, one who has learned its solace, its richness of joy, its hidden fountains of strength—believes in prayer, rejoices in prayer, although he cannot see that a single one of his prayers ever receives an answer in a tangible form. He has risen far above that aspect of prayer. He does not limit or measure the divine by his own human desires or expectations. He believes and knows that every one of his prayers is answered, because he believes in God and knows an infinitely loving, wise Good Heart, even the Heart of God. That Heart, he is sure, hears him and loves him and will do whatsoever is best for him.

One has aptly put it: "Perhaps we are like wireless stations, each tuned to the vibrations that individualize us, with God the Almighty Center holding the key for every human being. . . . Our connection with God, the source of all life, is never broken, it is

true; but prayer is the live current which makes that connection efficient. Without prayer, we are isolated, as it were, at the end of a dead wire. The universe itself is, to the devout mind, founded upon prayer, that is, on the principle of dependence, which is the fundamental note of prayer. Science and psychology concur in such a view. The world we live in, great as it seems to us, is as a grain of sand to the bulk of a vast mountain when compared to the numberless orbs that revolve through the million miles of space. But law and order govern the whole. Part is dependent upon part. We seem to ourselves, perhaps, isolated and self-contained. Yet I lift my hand, I make the slightest motion, and the clearest-headed thinker in the world of science tells me that the very movement of my fingers sends its vibrations to the farthest star, for hundreds of millions, or billions or quadrillions or sextillions of miles. Distance makes no difference. There can be no motion in one part without motion being in some way felt in another." \*

Such is the power of prayer,—a real thing in life, a real force in this universe.

\* Bishop Samuel Fallows, in *Health and Happiness*, 1908.

#### IV. THE CASTING OUT OF FEAR

**W**HAT are the morbid moods as ordinarily considered? Are they not too much self-retrospection; an over-conscientiousness; an ultra-sensitiveness, or mistrust of self, or suspicion of oneself, or of others; a sense of inferiority, or constant self-depreciation and depression; the pathological state of mind—a morbid curiosity and interest in disease and diseased condition; or a constant bondage to fear, such as fear of failure, fear of sickness, fear of death? The perpetually discouraged life is a form of morbidity. The moods of cynicism and pessimism are essentially morbid moods; for they do not look at life healthily; nor do they give out healthful influences. These, in general, are the chief forms of the morbid moods, and some of the forms at least that we consider in this address.

Morbid moods are no new ailments. The patriarch Job was in one when he was so depressed that he bewailed the day of his birth.

Elijah under the juniper tree is another instance; David, when he cried "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?"; Solomon, when he felt—"All is vanity and vexation of spirit." And the same infection has come at times to modern spirits—even to the gifted ones of earth. Let me quote from several:

Goethe says: "I will say nothing against the course of my existence. But at bottom it has been nothing but pain and burden, and I can affirm that during the whole of my seventy-five years I have not had four weeks of genuine well-being. It is but the perpetual rolling of a rock that must be raised up again forever."

Luther wrote: "I am utterly weary of life." The Electress Dowager one day when Luther was dining with her, said to him: "Doctor, I hope you may live forty years to come." "Madam," he replied, "rather than live forty years more, I would give up my chance of Paradise."

Bunyan's experience, as he wrote it, was this: "I was both a burthen and a terror to myself; nor did I ever so know as, now, what it was to be weary of my life, and yet afraid to die. How gladly would I have been anything but myself!"

Concerning one period of his life, Tolstoi wrote: "I felt that something had broken within me on which my life had always rested; that I had nothing left to hold on to, and that morally my life had stopped. . . . I did not know what I wanted. I was afraid of life. I was driven to leave it: and in spite of that I still hoped something from it. My state of mind was as if some wicked and stupid jest was being played on me by some one. One can live only so long as one is intoxicated, drunk with life; but when one grows sober, one cannot fail to see that it is all a stupid cheat. What is truest about it is that there is nothing funny or silly in it; it is cruel and stupid, purely and simply. . . . But perhaps (I often said to myself) 'there may be something I have failed to notice or to comprehend.' It is not possible that this condition of despair should be natural to mankind. And I sought for an explanation in all the branches of knowledge acquired by man. I questioned painfully and protractedly and with no idle curiosity. I sought, not with indolence, but laboriously and obstinately for days and nights together. I sought like a man who is lost and seeks to save himself—and I found nothing. I became convinced, more-

over, that all those who before me had sought for an answer in the sciences have also found nothing. And not only this, but that they have recognized that the very thing which was leading me to despair—the meaningless absurdity of life—is the only incontestable knowledge accessible to man.”

To those who are interested in a very detailed history and description of these moods, I would recommend Prof. James’ most interesting book on “The Varieties of Religious Experience,” and especially the chapters on “The Sick Soul,” and “The Religion of Healthy-mindedness.”

At this time, however, let us consider three chief classes of morbid moods which are especially prevalent.

The first group are the morbid moods of fear.

From childhood on, many are afflicted with morbid fears. There is a long series of morbid anticipations, as Horatio W. Dresser points out in his “Voices of Freedom,” namely, “that we shall suffer certain children’s diseases, diseases of middle life and of old age; the thought that we shall grow old, lose our faculties, and again become childish; while crowning all, is the fear of



death. Then there is a long line of particular fears and trouble-bearing expectations, such, for example, as ideas associated with certain articles of food, the dread of the east wind, the terrors of hot weather, the aches and pains associated with cold weather, the fear of catching cold if one sits in a draught, the coming of hay-fever upon the 14th of August in the middle of the day, or some similar date, and so on, through a long list of fears, dreads, worriments, anxieties, anticipations expectations, pessimisms, morbidities, and the whole ghostly train of fateful shapes, worthy to rank with Bradley's 'unearthly ballet of bloodless categories.'

"Yet this is not all. This vast array is swelled by innumerable volunteers from daily life, the fear of accident, the possibility of calamity, the loss of property, the chance of robbery, of fire, or the outbreak of war. And it is not deemed sufficient to fear for ourselves. When a friend is taken ill, we must forthwith fear the worst and apprehend death. If one meets with sorrow . . . sympathy seems to enter into and increase the suffering."

So also Horace Fletcher says in one of his books—"Happiness as Found in Forethought,

Versus Fearthought,"—" Fear has had its uses in the evolutionary process, and seems to constitute the whole of forethought in most animals; but that it should remain any part of the mental equipment of human civilized life is an absurdity. I find that the fear element of forethought is not stimulating to those more civilized persons to whom duty and attraction are the natural motives, but is weakening and deterrent. As soon as it becomes unnecessary, fear becomes a positive deterrent, and should be entirely removed, as dead flesh is removed from living tissue."

" Man often has fear stamped upon him before his entrance into the outer world," adds Mr. Henry Wood in one of his treatises. " He is reared in fear ; all his life is passed in bondage to fear of disease and death, and thus his whole mentality becomes cramped, limited, and depressed, and his body follows its shrunken pattern and specification. . . . Think of the millions of sensitive and responsible souls among our ancestors who have been under the dominion of such perpetual nightmare! Is it not surprising that health exists at all? Nothing but the boundless divine love, exuberance, and vitality, constantly poured in, even though unconsciously to us,

could in some degree neutralize such an ocean of morbidity."

Now what are the causes of these morbid moods? They are various, but we may mention the principal ones. The cause of course may be physical—some organic trouble—some diseased condition, or possibly only a slight derangement. It may be a climacteric condition, when the internal system of our life is undergoing a serious readjustment, such as oftenest happens at the age of puberty, or at twenty, forty or sixty years of age. Or, it may be nervous exhaustion, overwork, or over-worry, or wrong habits of life. Or bad hygiene—such as results in indigestion, a torpid liver and other derangements. Another cause may be a too delicate constitution. Some may be too sensitively built. The tough-fibered do not usually have these moods or troubles. Still another cause may be the inability to meet the real troubles of life—the actual failures, sickness and losses of property or loved ones. Or the cause may be wrong mental habits—the point of view mentally false or inadequate. Or the cause may be the unregenerate nature. The need of a new birth spiritually—a new frontage toward man, the universe and God.

What is the cure of morbid moods? I need not remind you that there is no one cure. But there are various cures, according to the nature and cause of the disease, and the treatment needed is often a combination of both physical and mental and spiritual.

Mental treatment may help to make better conditions for further work, although when an organic trouble is the cause, the initial and necessary treatment must be conducted by regular medical or surgical care. The physical trouble must be righted first of all. You all know that if the cause is nervous exhaustion, as it is in many cases, the first thing is to build up the nervous system again by rest-cure, by frequent feeding, and by psychic treatment. If the cause is climacteric condition, the best cure is to be as patient as one can—a change of scenery when possible, and as much light and wise amusement as can be given. When the cause is bad digestion, the best cure probably is to learn to eat wholesome food and to masticate thoroughly. When the cause is the liver, more outdoor exercise is needed, more fresh air. It is true that bad hygiene, bad air, and lack of exercise are responsible for many morbid moods. If the cause of the morbid moods be a deli-

cate constitution and a sensitive nature, we must use all reasonable means to build up physical strength and to harden ultra-sensitiveness. And when wrong mental habits are the cause, there must come a re-education of the mind into right thinking and a persistent exercise of the will-power along right lines.

These directions may be suggestive and helpful. We may say to these afflicted ones: Seek cheerful society. There is nothing better than the company of little children and of cheerful, healthy people. Take up some wholesome reading—avoid all else. Read a funny paper. Keep to the cheerful side of the Bible. If the cause is lack of spiritual vision, the sense of sin and the oppression of fate, then what is needed is a new spiritual experience in the life, bringing a new vision and trust in God.

We may say, in a word, that fear is the negative and abnormal condition of the inner life. Love is the normal, the divine equipoise. The process of the casting out of fear is the process of expelling an intruder and of bringing the life again into its natural, right, and wholesome condition. It is the very law of physics: "Two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time." As one comes

in, the other must go out. The heart at the start may be full of fear. Trust or love begins to come in. Fear is pushed out. And when the heart is full of trust, there is no place left for fear. For these are mutually exclusive. Perfect love means the heart full of love, the heart in which fear has no place.

Some of you can remember, as I do for myself, when your life was lived continually under fear. You feared ghosts and evil spirits; you feared disease; you feared failure; you dreaded God. You feared death; a thousand fears had possession of your life. But many of these fears you have conquered. It is a gradual process, but it may go on.

We can drive out fear by a new mental and spiritual outlook—a supreme confidence in God. We must say to ourselves—"We must not fear; we will not fear."

As Dr. Richard Cabot says: "What such persons need above all is to cultivate their inner resources, to strengthen their powers of defense against the discouragement, the anxiety, the depression which may flow into them as the result of whatever disagreeable or threatening events they meet. Nervous people are prone to take the color

of their surroundings ; they are oversensitive to the buffets and shocks of life. They need, above all, the power to resist, to shut out, to turn away from the compelling assertions of their environment, whether that environment be a commanding person, or a murky day, or a pain." \*

The surgeon must be fearless ; his hand must not tremble in the operation. That would be fatal. He must have confidence in himself and his work. The artist must not fear, else his trembling strokes will damage all his work. He must work only in faith and confidence in his skill.

So we in our life and work must not fear. We must go forward confidently with faith in ourselves and God. We are put here for work. No cringing, no trembling, but earnest and brave service. Perfect trust is that full, and frank communion by which we realize that the Father is with us. Perfect trust is the day's bravery in the fellowship of the divine. Perfect trust is the conquest of fear through the absorbing consciousness of God.


There is something splendid when a man walks the ways of life and does strong deeds, without the least particle of fear in his soul,

\* *Psychotherapy* magazine, Vol. I., No. 1.

serene and strong in his faith in God ; dauntless and deathless in his grasp on life and eternity ; free and fearless in all his spiritual doings and explorations ; standing up in the dignity of the spiritual manhood that God has given him.



## V. THE CONTROL OF THE IMAGINATION

HE second class of morbid moods which we are to consider at this time, are the morbid moods of a diseased imagination.

Imagination is a real factor in every one of our lives. We may not have the genius of imagination, but we have imagination. We dream of the future, and imagine what will be. We are constantly using imagination. We may use it prosaically or poetically; we may use it ignobly or beautifully; we may use it wholesomely or disastrously.

Do we often enough consider this fact: the world of imagination in every one of us has its sins and its sanctities? "The sins of the imagination" is a subject not often treated and yet it is a most important and vital one. The imagination has a close relation to deeds. Every sin in the life is first committed in the imagination.

We hear of some one gone wrong. We cannot think how it happened. For that person had been well-brought up, always appeared respectable, always seemed most normal. But the secret is here. It was, in a sense, a double life. Outwardly it was moral, as far as deeds go; but inwardly, and in the imagination, it was immoral. A great tree in the forest sometimes seems perfectly sound. But a blow at its trunk pulverizes it. It is rotten within. An insect has eaten out its heart and strength. The same thing may happen in a life.

A physician recently called attention to this matter in the following words: "Books are mainly silent on the subject of the diseased imagination. Fathers and mothers shrink from talking to their children about these things. Yet an impure word, a doubtful jest, a tale of wickedness is drunk in by these children, and excites the imagination and often does untold injury. In the realm of the imagination there is an enchanted middle ground between virtue and vice in which many a soul lives and feeds in secret. To them it seems to be harmless and without the pale of actual sin. There is no intention to sin, but only to filch the pleasure of imagination. But it is a

sin. The willing secret indulgence of the imagination is a gross evil, and one of the most dangerous of practices." \*

There is more ignoble use of the imagination than we sometimes think or confess. Many who would scorn the actual sin, indulge their imaginations viciously; they think in the freest, most irresponsible way; they talk about things which they have no right even to think about; they read about things that are salacious and that remain in the imagination as an unwholesome and disastrous influence.

What excuses do they give themselves in these matters? They seem to consider that the world of imagination is a free world, in which they can do whatsoever they will, without law or restriction. What is imagination, they say, except something unreal and unsubstantial? Some souls, whose actual lives afford few real pleasures, think that they can indulge as they please in the pleasures of imagination.

Do we say that it is impossible to control the imagination? Perhaps it is impossible to control it absolutely; but we can hold it in check, and it is surely possible not to

\* J. D. Plunket, M. D., Nashville, Ky.

stimulate and feed imagination with unwholesome nourishment.

Do any say that they have immunity in the field of imagination, since if it harms anybody, it will be nobody but themselves? But they must remember, they never harm themselves without harming others. "We are members one of another." Do we say that as long as thoughts do not issue in deeds, our thoughts are guiltless? We would scorn to do wrong; scorn to steal, scorn to murder, but yet do our thoughts circle sometimes round the whole compass of the commandments, and we think unworthy thoughts against God and man.

This is the great truth. It needs iteration and reiteration. Our thought is *real*—it is an actual and substantial part of us. Our imagination *does* count; our thought is a *deed*! It makes our life. God's word saith: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

These sins of imagination are dangerous in two ways. First they make temptation easier to us, by accustoming us to the thought of the sin. Some love to play with fire. Some love to walk along the edge of the precipice of temptation. It is most perilous; it is dallying with sin; it is inviting, even welcoming

temptation. It is the first step to the overt act. Never comes the deed, unless it is first committed in the imagination.

These imaginations also actually stain and weaken the fiber of the soul. An evil suggestion makes a strong impress upon the memory. It brushes off the bloom from the soul, and almost inevitably spoils something of the nobler life. An evil and unwholesome imagination may contaminate the very springs of life. It may create a subtle poison in the atmosphere. It may make the imagination permanently diseased, and thus a chronic curse in the life.

Moreover, these vicious or unwholesome imaginations, often become in themselves actual sin. If the evil thought come suddenly, and is resisted and scorned and flouted, no harm may be done. But if it come, and is nourished and cherished, and rolled as a sweet morsel under the tongue, then real sin is committed in the soul. It is the willing harboring and indulging of unworthy and ignoble imaginations that is the fatal thing.

This subtle peril begins in the earliest years, and some phases of it are life-long. Imagination is fresh and strong in childhood and youth. Children are wonderfully full of im-

agination and of an insatiate curiosity, although they are at first absolutely pure-minded. There has been many a case of evil imagination in childhood made and fostered by unwholesome surroundings or companions or habits. Parents should exercise wisdom in training the children, and teaching them so that the imagination may be directed into right channels. They should give the children plenty of good reading, and fill their lives with good wholesome friends and recreations, leaving no room for the evil influences.

There is so much yellow journalism in our day which panders to a vicious and morbid imagination, there is so much in modern literature that is unsavory, so much in modern theaters and their bill-board advertisements that is vicious and depraving. There are so many low places of amusement, frequented by children and young people, which are constant incitements to vicious imagination and actual vice. These things are the real menace in our present-day life.

Parents complain that their children are getting away from them—that they are losing a taste for solid reading and serious things, and that they constantly crave excitement. In youth they are already burning the can-

dle at both ends, living at the pace that kills, wasting their reserves, and becoming reckless and morbid in their moods.

Much of the trouble comes from the constant stimulation of imagination along unwholesome and morbid lines.

Fathers and mothers are largely responsible for these things. They ought to know what their boys and girls are reading, and what they are seeing. Perhaps a little more real companionship with their children, a little more careful and wholesome guidance, would mean much for them, and for the future years.

There comes the practical question: How can we definitely control the imagination, how can we purify our thought, how can we get rid of the morbidities and iniquities of the imagination and restore the sanctities of the inner life?

The process consists of three steps. First of all, we must have purification. We can have this only through the prayer: "Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." This is the beginning, the essential way. It is the work of God in the soul, purifying and renewing the life. It is the cleansing of the fountain. Nothing can come

before this; nothing is so important. Other methods are palliative. This goes to the root. This is the divine work, essential and fundamental.

But the second step is also exceedingly important: preoccupation. This is our part. That is, we are to fill our mind with noble pictures and noble images. We are to read noble books, think high thoughts, keep in a wholesome atmosphere. The mind must have something to work with. It will work with either good or bad material. Let it have the best material, and only this.


The third step of the process for the control of the imagination and the restoration of the sanctities of the inner life is this: Protection. We must use insistent, eternal vigilance in keeping out evil. Some evil can be seen and fought against. Books, pictures, songs, companions that are evil and vulgar, we must be resolute against. We must avoid people and places that tear down the veils of delicacy and purity in the inner life. We must set our faces resolutely against these things. We cannot play with fire without being burned. We cannot touch pitch without being defiled.

We were speaking of these visible evils.



Invisible suggestions of evil are as thick as germs in the air. We are none of us immune, except in one way; and that is, by keeping the spiritual health in good trim. If we neglect prayer and spiritual exercise and the good food of God's word, we will grow weak and liable to disease. The spiritual health is kept up by living in the light, and close to the heart of the Master.

## VI. THE CAUSE AND CURE OF THE WORRY-HABIT.

 THE third class of morbid moods which we have to consider are those bred by the worry-habit.

What is "worry"? We all recognize it as a mental habit and a mental condition. It may be temporary or chronic. It is fret, anxiety, undue solicitude, the habit of borrowing care or trouble, the mood of apprehension, living in past regrets, present doubts and future forebodings.

It has, as you know, various technical names in medical science. It may be hypochondria—undue solicitude and worry over one's health and a morbid attention to those things. It may be unhealthy obsession along certain insistent and compulsive lines of thought. It may be neurasthenia in one of the many forms of nervous disturbance characterized by exhaustion or irritability. It may be called a phobia, any one of the many engrossing fears without an adequate cause, that seem to afflict mankind.

Says a discriminating thinker: "Worry is not to be confounded with forethought, which is the general director of our mental forces. Forethought borrows wisdom from past failures and successes, with which to lay plans for the future. True, it considers obstacles and difficulties, as a good general should, but only as hindrances which may be overcome. Forethought progresses; worry, like a squirrel in a revolving wheel, is always at the same point. . . . Worry might be defined as thought plus apprehension, moving always in a circle." \*

Another puts the matter in this way: "Worry is always one of two things; it is idiocy or insanity. You may take your choice, there is no third. Worry depresses the physical vitality, destroys courage, dims the vision of the ideal, weakens the will, stands in the way of realizing anything worth while; and the human being who hopes to accomplish anything will get worry under his feet at the earliest possible moment. Work, on the other hand, good, honest, hard work, when in right relation, builds vitality and gives increased power." †

\* Bishop Samuel Fallows.

† Edward Howard Griggs.

A clever magazine writer defines it well in the words: "Worry is discounting possible future sorrows so that the individual may have present misery. Worry is the father of insomnia. Worry is the traitor in our camp that dampens our powder, weakens our aim. Under the guise of helping us to bear the present and to be ready for the future, worry multiplies enemies within our own mind to sap our strength."

What are the facts about the worry habit? We know that it is gaining among Americans. It grows easily and it becomes serious. Nervous worry is now the great American disease.

Some people worry over things that have happened; their lives are filled with vain regrets. Others worry over things that are going to happen. Some people worry over actual things; others are constantly worrying over imaginary things.

But we are awakening to the seriousness of the modern conditions of overwrought life. The steady increase of sanatoria and nervous hospitals, and rest-retreats are significant signs of the times. The forming in recent years of sunshine societies, of "don't worry" circles, and "hundred year" or century clubs for rational living, show that people are real-

izing the need of new helps to meet the new and perilous conditions.

It is not, however, the occasional and momentary times of worrying that are so pernicious. It is the continual and persistent worrying habit that is the trouble—the chronic worrying over everything—that is the morbid mood that must be cured.

This is the prevailing disease of our modern life. There is so much of it—women who are perpetually full of anxious cares, men who are full of restless nervous haste—that it seems as if St. Martha, nervous, solicitous St. Martha, were the patron saint of modern womanhood, and as if St. Vitus, quick, jerky, restless St. Vitus, were the patron saint of the business men of to-day.

Most people who are worried, worry over trifles. Some worry over the weather, and over temperature. Others worry over a spot of dirt. Some over-scrupulous housekeepers carry their house on their back wherever they go. Here one worries if a picture does not hang straight; another worries over foods, and this one over dress. Some worry over every shooting pain they have. They are always looking at their sensations through a microscope, and seeing them a thousand times

greater than they actually are. Many worry over their work, over their failures; others worry over criticism or lack of appreciation. A few worry over their spiritual condition—would there were more of these. Others worry over their financial condition. Many worry over themselves; some worry over others.

Now, as to the causes of the worry habit. Many are they and various. The cause may be physical. It may be some organic trouble (possibly a slight cause but an irritating one) for which the patient ought to consult some wise physician. It may be eye strain, producing nervous tension and irritability; or it may be teeth or throat trouble. It may be physical disturbance of the liver or stomach, often responsible for a good deal. Or the worry habit may be the result of overwork and general physical and nervous exhaustion. Again, the worry habit may be temperamental. Or, the worry habit may be the result of indulgence in a wrong mental attitude toward life. It may be carping thoughts and anxious thoughts run wild. This is doubtless the most prolific cause of the worry habit. The malady is most prevalent among thoughtful people, conscientious people, good workers, among

those whom we want to save from such things for the sake of themselves and the world.

True it is that the high nervous tension of our modern life is responsible for much of the worry condition. It is a restless life that many of us live—an unnatural fever. There is so much love of excitement, so great a struggle to keep up appearances, so feverish a desire to be something that we are not, such a nervous apprehension that we will be just what we actually are. There is such a living on nerves—such an unwillingness to be quiet, serene, passive and genuine—that the modern generation seems to be discovering a thousand more nerves than its ancestors, and is putting itself into condition to be irritated by trifles and to worry a mole-hill into a mountain.

How can the worry habit be cured? How can people attain to peace of mind and a cheerful philosophy of life? So that they shall be like him of whom Wordsworth speaks, in the line—

“A man of cheerful yesterdays and confident to-morrows.”

It is not sufficient to say, “Don’t worry,” or even to ask “Why worry?” These phases themselves may grow irritating however well

intended they are; nor do many find sufficient such advice as "Eliminate worry!" We want something more tangible. Unaided resolution is not sufficient. What we want is to find the simple elements out of which worry is constructed and eliminate them. We aim to take the keen edge off worry, and finally—to cure it entirely. In this way, we shall help our health, and also make better workers, worthier citizens and more agreeable companions.

This is the encouraging fact. The worry habit can be overcome. If it is temperamental—a real inheritance—even then it can be overcome, although it will be harder work. But we must understand—one cannot summarily stop worrying and be done with it. There will have to be a re-education of the mental habits. One can learn, by persistent will-power, how automatically to dismiss worry. But it may take some time. To cure the habit, one must be patient, persistent, determined to conquer. The worry habit cannot be conquered in one treatment, nor in one week. It is usually of long and gradual growth, and it will need rigorous and persistent treatment. But it can be overcome. That is the great fact! Step by step it can be conquered until the habit has disappeared,



and a new mental and spiritual atmosphere has come into the life.

This is the most vital and important part of the cure, and we put it into this single sentence: *Replace the worrying thought by some other thought that will keenly interest and stimulate the life.* This is the substitute cure. It can be made effective by persistent will. It can cure. It is capable of wonderful results.

This is what it means. Deliberately choose some thought, some interest, directly opposite to that which is worrying, and interesting enough to engross attention for a time, and then concentrate attention by will power upon it. Dwell on it. Get absorbed in it. Keep steadfastly away from the worry-thought. Do not allow yourself to come back to it. Think away from it. You can do it, if you try.

This is the substance of Horace Fletcher's popular pamphlets on "Menticulture" in its different phases. This is the chief method used by Dr. Walton of Boston, in his timely and suggestive little book called, "Why Worry?"

So also Dr. Achorn says in explaining this substitute cure: "The mind can be discharged from the consideration of any vex-

atious subject and the attention given to the enjoyment of any other. Mind cure is simply the acquiring of control over impulses, emotions, or habits that demoralize. It substitutes other habits, if necessary. The person gains mental poise, and leans toward optimism. The mind liberates the nervous mechanism and vital fluids of the body so that all the functions, both physical and mental, are performed normally. Whether the condition recognized as a chronic disorder or disease is due to mental or physical causes, one cannot always easily determine. If the person suffering is willing to cultivate one or two new habits for the old ones he suspects, although he may not be able to see that they are the cause of his trouble, he will often be surprised at the outcome." \*

This definite method, simple as it is, rests on sound psychology and physiology. The greatest things after all are often the simplest, and commend themselves to our common-sense. Psychology teaches us that obsession (and worry is a form of obsession) can only be cured by replacement. The ability to forget, to inhibit one thing and to sub-

\* J. Warren Achorn, M. D., in *Religion and Medicine*.

stitute another, is one of our finest mental abilities. Physiology also shows us conclusively that we stimulate whatever we resolutely fix our attention upon. If we think unduly about our ills, our health is affected. If we forget them we get along better. Chronic introspection is a disease. Worry causes a disturbance and derangement of the entire vital system.

Let us remember, therefore: The best cure for worry is substitution. Replace the worry thought by a better thought. Choose a wholesome, stimulating thought and keep to it. Deliberately do this, and use your will-power to enforce it.

Whether there is a microbe of worry we do not know. Perhaps some enterprising doctor will discover one after awhile, and teach us also its antidote. But we do know that worry is singularly contagious and infectious. Just one person in a household with a bad case of worry is enough to demoralize the whole house, to put everybody on edge and to cast a gloom over the atmosphere of the entire family.

But the microbe of worry, whether it is in the blood or the nerves, the heart, or the soul, or the air, can often be successfully

fought and conquered by a persistent will, working along the lines of substitution. Will is a marvelous antidote for a great many things, but in this matter of the worry-habit it often works almost a miracle.

Does this one method seem too general a direction? Here then, are some minor but definite matters which will help in accomplishing the substitution cure, and persons afflicted with the worry-habit might well be advised in such lines as these:

1. First, keep your physical system in tone. For, in all this work, the physical and mental must act together and help each other. Look well after your daily hygiene. If possible, take a sponge bath every morning, not necessarily cold, but with the chill just taken off. Then a rub-down with a rough towel, and a few exercises and a few minutes of deep breathing. Not too much clothing, day or night; heavy clothing irritates. A walk at least of two miles daily in the open air,—perhaps to and from the office, or better, in the country.

Arrange your life so that you can have a little vacation every day. The best time for a vacation is a little every day, and for a long vacation, just before, and not after you

are exhausted. Eat regularly, slowly and masticate thoroughly. Get your hours of sleep or rest. These things will help in keeping you in fine physical trim and tone.

2. Neglect your sensations and stop that habit of introspection. Leave your mind alone, your morals alone, your conscience alone. You have paid enough attention to them. Leave your body at peace for a while. A little neglect of your internal organs will be wholesome for them and for you. You stir them up too much by thinking about them. Direct your attention voluntarily away from yourself. Get up and do something. Go out and see something. Your trouble may not be so much nervous as misdirected energy and acquiescence in inertia and despondency.

3. Take up a fad. We need diversity of interests. Fads are blessings in disguise. Take up something in which you are interested and devote some time and thought to it, even if only half an hour a day. You will think of it oftener. Photography, astronomy, music, history, old books, old prints, old furniture, a foreign language, collecting coins, studying birds or trees, pictures, golf, tennis or other things; carpenter work, wood carving, cabinetmaking, would

be good fads. One of the best is working in a garden. Such side pursuits give an interest to life, and should be encouraged.

4. Another point—pin your worries down to definite facts. Most of your worries are vague and indefinite. Many of them are imaginary. Write down in black and white what you are worrying about, and oftentimes you will see how absurd it is. The process of putting it down will clarify your vision. Sometimes at night, if you worry, promise yourself to clear it up in the morning; often that will be sufficient.

5. Learn to see the humor of the situation. Parents were worrying over their little child one night, who was fretting as they do sometimes. The situation was growing tense when the wife said—"Aren't you thankful that we do not live in the polar regions where the nights are six months long?"

A Chinese philosopher wrote ages ago: "The legs of the stork are long, the legs of the duck are short: you cannot make the legs of the stork short, neither can you make the legs of the duck long. Why worry?"

6. Be philosophical. When you miss a car, do not say, "There goes my car!" but

rather, "The next car is mine!" When you miss an engagement now and then, after trying hard to meet it, why worry over it? Such things happen to everyone now and then. Such is life. When you are traveling, do not worry because the train does not go faster, or think continually of the journey's end. Enjoy things as you go along. The speed of the train and arrival are not as vital as you think. It is vital to enjoy life now. If you fret about the weather it is futile. It will not change for you. Better make friends with the weather in all its moods. Learn to enjoy it in all its phases. Someone says: "Anyone can stand what he likes: it takes a philosopher to stand what he does not like." It is said that Canon Beadon, who lived to be very old, told a friend that the secret of long life in his own case was that he never thought of anything unpleasant after ten o'clock at night.

"You may learn," as Dr. William Osler says, "to consume your own smoke. The atmosphere is darkened by the murmurings and whimperings of men and women over the non-essentials, the trifles that are inevitably incident to the hurly-burly of the day's routine. Things cannot always go your way.

Learn to accept in silence the minor aggravations, cultivate the gift of taciturnity, and consume your own smoke with an extra draught of hard work, so that those about you may not be annoyed with the dust and soot of your complaints."

7. Live only one day at a time. You need not live your whole past through every day. You need not borrow the future years. Live this one day. It is enough. And sometimes more than enough. But we can at least get through one day bravely. Michael Angelo used to say—"To-day I endure." Prof. Palmer put it: "We can always stand it for twenty-four hours." President Lincoln had his favorite phrase for trouble: "And this too will pass." There is a quaint proverb that has a great deal of wisdom in it. It runs: "Never trouble trouble, till trouble troubles you." A certain father on his death-bed said to his children: "My children, don't worry: I have had many heavy troubles in my life, but most of them have been imaginary ones. Don't worry. It doesn't pay. Don't cross the bridge till you come to it."

But now we come to the third and most vital point—the spiritual factor in the cure of the worry habit.



Worry is no more amenable to mere physical treatment, than swearing or drunkenness. But in the treatment for a real cure must come both physical, mental and spiritual elements. We have considered the physical treatment and the mental. We have yet a few words to say about the spiritual treatment of the worry-habit.

Dr. Saleeby has pointed out that the two greatest religions the world has ever seen, Buddhism and Christianity, are essentially anti-worrying religions, though reaching the goal by very different routes. Buddhism says, "Worry is an inevitable accompaniment of life. In order to get rid of it you must destroy the desire to live, and the goal of all being is Nirvana. It means absolute acquiescence; the end of worry, because the end of life." Christianity, on the contrary says, "The great need is not less, but more abundant life. Worry is something that may be transcended, and the power by which you transcend it is trust in God and the service of man."

Another confirmation is the witness of one of our leading psychologists, Professor James, who says, "The sovereign cure for worry is religious faith. The turbulent billows of

the fretful surface leave the deep parts of the ocean undisturbed, and to him who has a hold of vaster and more permanent realities, the hourly vicissitudes of his personal destiny seem relatively insignificant things." \*

It is still the substitution cure that we advocate, even by spiritual treatment. Replace your doubting, restless, distrustful, faithless attitude to God, by a trustful and confident faith in God. Take God at His word. Accept and believe His promises and your worries will gradually disappear, and all life will become new.

There is one cause of worry in many lives which might well be considered in connection with spiritual treatment, and that is the fact of actual transgression in the life. This is a rightful and sufficient cause for worrying. A man should not expect peace if he lives in deliberate sin. Conscience will torment him and it ought to. Such an one is never really happy. He may seem so outwardly, but down deep in his heart there is a root of bitterness. Sin cannot be happy. The pleasures of sin have in them the sting of remorse. Anybody living in sin ought to worry and worry a great deal. For the life is wrong.

*\* Talks with Teachers on Psychology.*

But such ought to do more than worry. They ought to put themselves right. There is help for them if they will, and a better life—a clean leaf for beginning a new record, and a new strength for the new life.

And yet, even among religious people we oftentimes find worry, and here it is often a want of faith in the heart. This is a very real and widely prevalent cause.

Why not trust God? Why not take Him at His word? Why not believe Him when He says that He is with us and that “all things work together for good?”

It is not unfair to say that persistent worrying is persistent unbelief—it is a subtle form of atheism. We may not intend it to be so, but so it is in its practical effects. A worrying Christian is a poor product of Christian faith—where does the faith come in at all? A Christian has no right to worry. It is doubting God’s care and goodness. John Wesley used to say, “I would as soon curse and steal as worry. It is doubting God.”

Learn to look on the bright side, on the divine side. Cultivate the habit. Here is a practical way of doing it. Have one of your visiting cards with such words as these writ-

ten on the back—"God is love.—Count your mercies.—Worry never does any good.—Things might be worse.—All things work together for good.—Be of good cheer, says Christ.—Have faith in God." Whenever you are disposed to worry, take this card and read it, and it will change the current of your thoughts. Use this card faithfully for a while and soon you will not need it.

Napoleon, it is said, owed much of his energy, daring, prowess and success to his belief that he bore a charmed life, that he might do and dare anything, that disaster and death could not overtake him until his fate was accomplished.

But we have a deeper and truer assurance. We are in God's hands, and nothing can really or permanently harm us and there is no death for us. "All things work together for good." We can absolutely rest in the assurance, if we will, that it is not our duty to worry about ourselves or the universe. We are not responsible for the universe. It is God's doing and He is working out His plans. So with our lives. They are God's creation and He is working out His plan in them. All that we have to do is to try our best to work with Him. Take no anxious

thought for the morrow, but take thought of God.

We must remember that we cannot grow in stature by straining ourselves upward, by taking anxious thought, nor can we grow in soul by strain, introspection and agonizing. We can only grow in nature or grace by putting ourselves in the natural ways of growth, by getting into the rhythmic mood of Nature, into the deeper ways of the spirit, into fuller and fuller harmony with God's will as it is revealed to us.

We will find a deeper and richer spiritual experience as we learn to meditate often on the greatest facts of spiritual life, and come more continually to realize them in our lives. Such a habit cannot fail to bring a more joyous and confident mind and spirit, and react most helpfully and hopefully on the whole life, spiritually, mentally, even physically.

Such a trust and faith means resting, absolutely resting the heart continually in the promises of God. It is taking God at His word. And His word is an impregnable rock. It is like a great Gibraltar in the midst of the changing sea of human life. Times may change, friends may change, all things change, but the Gibraltar of God—a strong-

hold and fortress—standeth forever. We plant our feet upon the Rock of God's word. We may tremble at times. But the Rock beneath is strong as adamant, and immovable as the everlasting hills.

These are some of the mental and spiritual factors in the cure of the morbid moods of persistent fears, and of diseased imagination, and of the chronic worry-habit. Of course, they are merely suggestions of rational persuasion along these lines. Each case is a separate experiment, and the special ways of reasoning, and the mental and spiritual stimulus to be suggested, must be dictated by the circumstances involved, but in something of this method of giving a new outlook on life, may come, in many cases, the very help that is needed.

## VII. THE GOSPEL OF RELAXATION

**A**S we have previously said, we must remember that nervous diseases are real diseases, just as real as a fever or a broken bone.

They are not imaginary; they cannot be laughed away. We must comprehend the actual conditions. We must sincerely sympathize with the sufferers. But we must also be firm and confident in meeting such conditions, for in these new days nervous diseases can be treated effectively and successfully.

The first and wisest thing in any case of neurasthenia is for the patient to consult a good physician who is a specialist along these lines—and who is sympathetic to new thought and methods, and who is broad enough and wise enough to use psychology when necessary; then to follow his advice as faithfully as possible.

You know, of course, about the rest-cure, technically so-called, as used by Dr. Weir Mitchell, Dr. Playfair, Dr. Paul DuBois, and

others, for twenty or thirty years past—the usual features being, first, complete rest in bed for a term of weeks; secondly, complete isolation, without letters or visits, although this has been modified in later years; and thirdly, overfeeding as frequently as possible to give increase of bodily weight. But Dr. DuBois tells us that his experience completely demonstrated that this course of treatment was rarely sufficient in itself. He found that the most effective factor in it all was the moral factor, and therefore, in all cases he advises constant use of rational psychotherapy, which he illustrates very definitely and fascinatingly in his record of twenty years' experience as given in his book "The Psychic Treatment of Nervous Disorders."

Do we know as much as we ought of that rest-cure which consists in teaching how to meet life by the doctrine of non-resistance? This is worth keeping to the fore in rational psychotherapy.

First of all, therefore, let us consider the philosophy of the rest-cure, and the new gospel of relaxation. There is much in daily life, especially with nervousness, that can be accomplished by accepting the doctrine of non-resistance a little more fully. It is a



preliminary step for healing many of the ills that flesh is heir to.

Some of you perchance have read that suggestive book by Annie Payson Call, entitled, "Power through Repose," and her other book, "The Freedom of Life." These books have many chapters on this doctrine of the passive mood. They preach a veritable gospel of relaxation. Some things in the books may not perchance appeal to all of us, but yet there is plenty of good suggestion and an inspiring spirit.

Certain people work and quickly become fatigued. What is the trouble? Not the work, but the way they work. They attack their work with too much nervous tension and strain. They ought not to get fagged out by work, only wholesomely tired. When we get fatigued, we are working with too much tension at the back of the neck. We had better learn the art of the passive mood in work, that we may do the task easily and make even drudgery a pleasure. We had better get a new attitude to our work.

Many people sleep and get no rest. They have the resistance habit. They are almost as tired in the morning as when they went to rest. Perhaps they sleep in a cramped

position, all doubled up, or with insufficient ventilation, or without relaxing the mind. They work all night in their sleep, if they sleep at all. They had better learn the passive mood. It can cure all this.

Many people eat regularly, three times a day—in an attitude of resistance to life. They do not get the full benefit of their food. They eat too much, or not enough, or too fast, under a strain and tension. They had better relax mind and body, eat slowly and in the attitude of the passive mood. They will find better digestion.

Some people allow even their amusements to wear them out—all strain, tension, excitement, emotions rampant, nerves on the stretch. They had better learn the art of relaxation and make amusements a real recreation.

There are those who let their sympathies wear them out in resisting the sorrows of suffering and calamity. Such sympathy is weak and sentimental. A true, large sympathy is strengthening. They need to get their sympathies on a higher plane, where they can relax in the larger vision of the blessing that suffering and calamity may bring.

A man has some hard problem to solve.

He gets into a highly wrought nervous condition over it, and it becomes more and more difficult and no nearer solution. In despair he leaves it; he relaxes; he goes about something else. And when after a time he comes back, the problem seems to solve itself. In reality, it is because he has allowed subconsciousness to work, and also has come back to it with clearer brain and rested nerves.

Many mothers wear themselves out resisting their children. Their whole idea of training seems to be resistance. They had better learn the art of acceptance and guidance. All vehemence is weak; all nagging is wrong.

Some patients are constantly resisting. The doctor has to say—"Now just relax. Just be passive and let Nature have a chance to do her work. Don't worry about the office. Make up your mind to take a rest while you are here. Don't resist. Accept. And you will get well twice as soon."

What does all this mean? Does it not indicate that we ought to use and to teach the doctrine of the passive mood a great deal more than we do? We are too much on the strain, on high tension in life. We get into the chronic condition of excited nerves, of

muscles contracted, taunt, tense, and we forget how to relax.

We get so into the habit of persistent resistance that we wear ourselves out. The habit of resistance is at the root of worry, hurry, strain and irritability. Continual mental resistance gives brain fag; continual physical resistance gives nervous exhaustion.

Therefore, it is a part of wisdom to learn to relax mind and body. The gospel of relaxation has a great lesson for daily life, even on the physical side. Notice people on the street. Most of them are sad looking. They are absorbed, intent on themselves or their troubles. Look at people in a street car. Most of them have a drawn look in their features—faces grown hard with the constant habit of resistance against the world, and feeling that the world is against them. Chronic resistance has become fixed habit. It is all wrong.

All methods of mental healing inculcate the value of passivity in their treatment. The first thing is to place the patient in a comfortable position in an easy chair, and to command him: "Relax, now, relax every muscle! Be as passive as you can." This is the necessary condition before help can be

given. It is a complete surrender. It is giving up to a higher wisdom for a time. But relaxation is not an end in itself. It is only a preliminary condition to something better—something positive, stimulating, and inspiring, and that something better is the strengthening and helpful truth persistently affirmed and reaffirmed in right mental suggestion.

Moreover, the doctrine of the passive mood has its wisdom on the moral side, and this will also help in controlling the nerves. As an attitude to life, it is the triumphant way. If we are continually resisting and worrying over circumstances, life is a hard fight. But if we are willing to fail, willing to be poor, willing to suffer if needs be, willing to die when our time comes—as Stevenson says,

“Glad have I lived and glad will I die,  
And I lay me down with a will,”—

then we have lost the fear of all these things and can live life comfortably and bravely. If we realize that life's circumstances, whatever they may be, are not limitations or punishments, but opportunities for a nobler triumph, then will come the power of new conquest in life.

As a method of meeting antagonists in the ordinary ways of life, the passive mood has its advantages. When a man shows fight, it stirs up fight. Resistance excites counter-resistance. Force arouses all the antagonism. Systematic opposition, even to a child, develops all the wrong nature in him. When you meet a blatant fighter, he does not impress you nearly so much as one who does not fight at all, but just holds the truth strongly and asserts it calmly.

There is a modern as well as ancient wisdom in the words—"A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger." When we allow ourselves to lose our temper, we always lose more than we gain. When we cultivate the fighting spirit, we are arousing the passions in us which secrete a poison in our system, and disorder all our inner life. The spirit of calmness; the taking of insult, or even of injustice, with equanimity is an attitude worth cultivating.

The Japanese art of self-defense called Jiu-jutsu is a most suggestive illustration as Lafcadio Hearn explains it. Jiu-jutsu means literally conquering by yielding, and this is really the essential feature of the defense. It looks something like wrestling to our mod-

ern eyes, but the fine art of it is the gentle art of non-resistance. The purpose is to encourage the antagonist to deal his heaviest blows and gracefully escape them. So skillfully is it learned and practiced that, in his defense, an adept can make one who is unskillful unloose a joint or break his arm by a mere wrench at a vulnerable point. The stronger the opponent the worse his discomfiture. It is intelligence and skill against brute force. This is all suggestive.

In the physical way and for psychical healing, the doctrine of the passive mood is a preliminary to the further work. It is a clearing away of the barriers. It is making the right conditions for a positive work. It is the attitude of receiving. And that work, as we said, is largely the instilling into the passive mind and into the subconsciousness of the relaxed muscles, the positive affirmations of truth, of purity, of health, of the divine life.

## VIII. WORK AS A FACTOR IN HEALTH

**T**HESE few suggestions as to the value of relaxation, and especially as it is carried out under careful direction in a rest-cure, lead us to consider a further step in the re-education of the nerves—and that is the work-cure.

It is healthful to work. But it must be reasonable work to be healthful. A most excellent rule for the division of the day is the ancient one, ascribed to Alfred the Great:—"Eight hours for work, eight hours for play, eight hours for sleep." That seems natural and sensible. None of us should do more than eight good hours of hard work and even less, if it is continuous intellectual work. Eight hours of play means the time for meals, recreation and social life. Every life should have some recreation every day. And then eight hours for sleep—genuine sleep or at least the absolute rest in the quiet. Now it is an exceptional individual who can do with less than this amount of rest. It



is not wise to cut off any of these hours of rest. It is suicidal to burn the candle at both ends.

The old but divine command: "Six days for work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God," must not be forgotten. One day in seven is not yours; it belongs to God. God would make it for you a day of real refreshment of soul and body—no physical labor; none of the occupations of the week—no blanket newspapers, full of secular matter; but a new day—a day of opportunity, a day of new vision; a time of worship with God in the sanctuary; a new glimpse into God's Word; a walk in the fields with God; a visit of kindness or sympathy to some of God's children; a day of divine rest and recreation and love.

Many people are spoiling their lives by making all seven days alike. They break the divine law. Some devote six days to selfish competition and the seventh day brings no vision—how can such people see life as it ought to be, or do their work with any heart? Six days devoted to hard and reasonable work and the seventh day devoted to the things of the higher life—will make work a blessing and a health in the life.

Now work is not merely a necessary factor in every day's good health—a part of the natural law for the preservation of health—but work may also become a means of restoration to health.

The value of enjoyment on the physical side gained by self-forgetful work is well brought out by Forel, in his "Hygiene of Nerves and Mind." He says: "We must banish pleasure-seeking (but not pleasure itself) from our lives. Every pleasure cultivated for its own sake leads to ennui and disgust and injures the nervous health. Every healthy enjoyment must be earned by an harmonious mode of life. It is a pleasure to sleep, even on a hard bench, if you are tired; or to eat crude dishes, if you are hungry. To drink pure water is a healthy enjoyment, if you have a natural thirst, and it does not injure one like the satisfaction of the artificial thirst for alcohol that results in poisoning. Mental work is a healthy pleasure, if the need for muscular exercise and activity beside it is also satisfied. Muscular work is a pleasure when alternated with activity of thought and feeling, but not when carried on purely mechanically and automatically without any active attention;

for then it does not replace either abstract thought or emotional excitement, which can both be present to lead us astray in spite of such work."

There may be a very interesting comparison instituted between Omar Khayyám and Ecclesiastes. Both emphasize this present life; both seem rather pessimistic; both say—"do your best to enjoy life." But how different are the ways that they suggest.

Omar's ideal of enjoyment is:

"A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,  
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and  
Thou  
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—  
O Wilderness were Paradise enow!"

It is careless, easy, lazy ideal. The useless life expressed in the Italian—"dolce far niente"—the sweet pleasure of doing nothing.

But in Ecclesiastes the ideal of enjoyment is this, thrice repeated and emphasized as the keynote of the book: "I know that there is no good but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life . . . and to enjoy the good of all his labor, it is the gift of God."

Again: "There is nothing better for a

man than that . . . he should make his soul enjoy good in his labor. This also I saw that it was from the hand of God."

And still again: "Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion." That is, it is the life of usefulness that is the best life and the happiest.

In a word, this is the difference between Omar Khayyám and Ecclesiastes. Omar's chief figure is an idler, a loafer, a dilettante. But Ecclesiastes' is a worker, rejoicing in his work, loving his work and enjoying it, full of practical thrift and wholesome service.

However the present popularity of Omar Khayyám is a sign of reaction against absorption in theological subtleties and speculations. It is real appreciation of this life. Its attractive theme is—"Let's make the most out of this life."

But this is also the equally attractive theme of Ecclesiastes, treated in a much wiser way. Ecclesiastes is a much greater book. It is not morbid, but wholesome, when looked at rightly. It is not melancholy, but inspiring. It is an exposition of the best that was then known. Its chief theme is, Do not worry about the future, but work in the present

with all your strength, and it will be your joy!

It is not work that kills, not even hard work. We may work hard every day until we are physically tired, but if we have good food and sufficient sleep, we may be able to stand it for a long stretch. But put hard work and worry together and there the mischief is done. It is not hard work, but worry that kills. We have instances of this every day.

"This world," as one says truly, "was given us to work in and to play in. It is a pretty place; but thousands of people under existing conditions seem to make a nightmare out of ordinary work and living. . . . Under the stress of modern competition one-half of mankind overpowers the other half and then has them to take care of as invalids. Women compete with men under the laws made for men, although women are rated half as strong physically as men." All these things make hard working conditions.

It is most pitiable to see many people, who know better, wearing themselves out even in social settlements and philanthropic work because they will not stop a minute. Some excellent school teachers are on the strain

from one week's end to another and at the end of the term are nervous and physical wrecks. One splendid teacher, however, told me once when I asked her how she kept in such exceptional and prime physical condition, "I take a little vacation every day and I do not worry." She was a fine worker, a hard worker, but she did not worry.

Oh for the gift of knowing when to stop work! Work does become fascinating and absorbing. We think we must do it; or we have the passion for finishing it. We say, "just an hour or two more and it is finished." We work even when the warning has been given, and we know we should not continue.

This I contend. We know when we ought to stop. The instinct, God-given, is within. Often it has been emphasized in our lives by bitter and costly experience. If we are sensible, we will obey the inherent laws of God, live in a cheery wholesome mental atmosphere and use our common sense and we can do good work and full work.

For many people, work is salvation—the occupation-cure is the very thing that is needed. Some people are afflicted with worry, nervous fears, abnormal restlessness or melancholia; and then, oftentimes, the

very best thing is to get them to do something; to get them interested in work, thus taking their thoughts as far as possible from themselves and their condition. Many sanitariums use these methods very effectively.

It is thoroughly proved by many experiences. Physical exercises requiring fixed attention often exert a most beneficial influence on certain classes of nervous sufferers. Such pleasant work as cataloging, clay-modeling, gymnastic exercises are frequently of the greatest value.

Most of us know that it is a great deal more tiresome to have nothing to do than to be full of work. The happiest people in this world are not the idlers; they are those who are busy all the time, those who work and work hard. If work was ever a curse, now it is a blessing. It is only when it becomes overwork that it is a curse.

Do you remember that paragraph in Lecky's "Map of Life?" He is quoting from a famous physician, Dr. Mortimer Granville: "The best way to live well, is to work well. Good work is the daily test and safeguard of personal health. . . . The practical aim should be to live an orderly and natural life. We were not intended to pick

our way through the world, trembling at every step. . . . It is worse than vain, for it encourages and increases the evil it attempts to relieve. . . . I firmly believe," he continues, "that one-half of the confirmed invalids of the day could be cured of their maladies if they were compelled to live busy and active lives and had no time to fret over their miseries. . . . One of the most seductive and mischievous of errors in self-management is the practice of giving way to inertia, weakness and depression. . . . Those who desire to live should settle this well in their minds, that nerve power is the force of life and that the will has a wondrously strong and direct influence over the body and nervous system."

But another helpful thought we would emphasize—not only is work a part of the divine law of our being for possessing health; not only is work often the best means for the restoration of health—but this thought: We ought to have as a constant mental background and spiritual stimulus the conviction that God has given us work to become the greatest joy of our lives.

We must realize that when we work, we are working with Him. We must rejoice in



our work, because in doing it, we are in fellowship with the divine creative power. Here we come to the most inspirational and tonic part of the philosophy of work. We need this spiritual stimulus. We are to rejoice in our work, for it is a blessing to humanity. The world needs all kinds of workers. Hand workers are just as much needed as brain workers. The farmer in the field is just as much needed as the statesman in the cabinet.

Go into a carpenter's shop. The song of the plane takes one back to the carpenter shop at Nazareth. Go into a great machine shop and see them working in the solid iron and steel, and see the great machines running so majestically, unerringly, inevitably in their work. Such a visit puts tonic into our blood. What an interesting place is one of our great merchant stores! A great hive of industry, where each has his special field!

Stand in a colossal city like New York, and wonder how such an immense city with its millions would ever find its food—a million loaves of bread every day, rivers of milk, a hundred head of cattle every day. But the problem is solved by that unique

law of supply and demand, and the busy activities of thousands and tens of thousands of workers, each doing his useful part.

The whole world is as busy as a bee. Upon this incessant toil of the multitudes depends the life and happiness of existence. Each one fits somewhere, each one has his niche in the order of existence, each one must bring his contribution toward the general welfare. Whatever our work may be, by brain or hand, humble or conspicuous, at home or in public, whatever it is, if it be honest work, it is a blessing to humanity, and if we do it faithfully, we are benefactors of the race.

Blessed is that man who sees deeply into his work. There is no work but what is pleasurable, and intensely interesting, if the worker takes the trouble to get below the surface of his task. The strength and variety of materials, the miracle of natural action, the marvel of mechanics, the dexterity or ingenuity of hand or mind, the possibilities of improvement, the satisfaction of achievement—these are all full of an ever-growing interest and surprise, to one who sees deeply. If our work is commonplace or tedious in our chosen field or profession, de-

pend upon it, it is because we ourselves are growing commonplace or tedious.

No honest work ought to be beneath us. No useful or beautiful thing is unworthy of our best efforts in the making. There is nothing in Nature, however trifling or obscure, but the divine wisdom and strength wrought in its making. God's work is not merely religious work. We have strange notions, and limit God's work most curiously. God's work is also material work—physical and artistic. Everything that man has done, God has done before him. Every invention of man, God had previously invented in His brain. So all good work is work with God. Deuteronomy says expressly—"Say not in thine heart, my power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord, thy God; for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth." It is also said expressly that all artificers of the temple worked under the inspiration of the Almighty.

The inspiration of the Almighty! What is the ultimate purpose of this man's making shoes, and that one selling grain, and that one doing farming, and the other weaving shawls? Is it to the end of physical wealth

or comfort? Mark you! The purpose of all work is that we may enter into true life, and feel sympathy with the divine purpose. In a word, it is to enter into closer fellowship with the divine. Work ought not to be a mere bread and butter strife, not a mere pot-boiling business. It is a divine fellowship in the art of a divine creation. All work and all labor are hints of God's continual work. Every work is, to a greater or less extent, a similitude of the work of creation. It is a transformation by will power and intelligence of forces and materials. This is the mental attitude that can make work a joy, a strength and an inspiring factor of health. We must learn to see the divine quality of work. Such a view of work as this, if we can bring it home to those who most need it, will be a real help in making work interesting, and will be profitable in the re-education of the nerves.

## IX. THE INSPIRATION OF THE MENTAL OUTLOOK

**W**E come more definitely to the mind-cure in this same process of restoration of the nerves to equilibrium. And the first question which confronts us is, Can the nerves be helped by a larger and truer mental outlook?

For the slighter degrees of nervous exhaustion, and especially for the preservation of our nervous system in good health, some of the following mental and spiritual suggestions may prove helpful to many. They are founded on sound psychology and physiology, although they may seem simplicity itself.

1. We do not begin to value at its full worth such a mental factor as cheerfulness, both in the maintenance of health and the cure of the slighter forms of nerve disorders.

Here is the testimony of a physician: "In the maintenance of health and the cure of disease, cheerfulness is a most important factor. Its power to do good like a medicine

is not an artificial stimulation of the tissues to be followed by reaction and greater waste, as is the case with many drugs; but the effect of cheerfulness is an actual life-giving influence through a normal channel, the results of which reach every part of the system. It brightens the eye, makes ruddy the countenance, brings elasticity to the step, and promotes all the inner force by which life is sustained. The blood circulates more freely, the oxygen comes to its home in the tissues, health is promoted and disease is banished.\*

Nor is it all merely therapeutic. Cheerfulness has its practical everyday value in the business world. "A sunny, cheerful, gracious soul," as one says, "is like an ocean breeze in sultry August, like the coming of a vacation. We welcome it because it gives us at least temporary relief from the strenuous strain of life. Country store-keepers look forward for months to the visits of jolly, breezy traveling men, and their wholesale houses profit by their good-nature. Cheerful-faced and pleasant-voiced clerks can sell more goods and attract more customers than disagreeable ones. Promoters, organizers of great enterprises, must make a

\*Dr. A. J. Sanderson.

business of being agreeable, of harmonizing hostile interests, of winning men's good opinion. Newspaper men, likewise, depend on making friends to gain entrée, to get interviews, to discover facts, and to find news. All doors fly open to the sunny man, and he is invited to enter, when the disagreeable, sarcastic, gloomy man has to break open the door to force his way in. Many a business success is founded on courtesy, cheerfulness and good humor." \*

2. Besides cheerfulness, there is real worth in the cultivation of courage. Courage is a mental condition that can be cultivated and it is of distinct therapeutic value.

So Dr. Marden, editor of the "Success" Magazine writes: "If young people only knew the power of affirmation, of the habit of holding in the mind persistently and affirming that they are what they wish to be, that they can do what they attempt, it would revolutionize their whole lives, it would exempt them from most of their ills and troubles, and carry them to heights of which they scarcely dream."

3. A serene and sunshiny life is food and tonic for the nerves. It is no small or un-

\* Dr. Marden in *Every Man a King*.

important task to cultivate sunshine in the life. A sunny serene outlook makes better work.

Recall the mental balance and equipoise of spirit in the great poets, such as Shakespeare, Tennyson and Browning. They are serene and optimistic, because of their large vision. Undoubtedly it is true, as one says: "The work turned out by a calm balanced mind is healthy and strong. There is a vigor and naturalness about it that is not found in the work done by a one-sided man, a mind out of balance. Serenity never dwells with discontent, with anxiety, with over-ambition. It never lives with the guilty, but dwells only with a clear conscience; it is never found apart from honesty and square dealing, or with the idle or vicious."

4. Good sleep is food and strength to the nerves and a serene and sunny mental outlook gives better sleep. One physician says: "I know a few people who have learned the supreme art of preparing for a sweet, peaceful, restful, refreshing sleep by reversing the brain processes which have perplexed them and bothered them during the day. They have learned the secret of shutting out all their troubles, trials and perplexities, of lock-



ing them in the store or office or factory when they turn the key at night. They never drag their business troubles home. They consider themselves at play from the moment they leave work until they get back again. Nothing can induce them to be bothered or bored with anything relating to business. They have learned the secret and power of harmonious thought, the happy thought, the optimistic thought. They prepare their minds for a serene, harmonious night's sleep by summoning thoughts of joy, youth, peace, and love, to be their mind's guests for the night, and will entertain no others. They will not allow the old worry-thought and anxious thought to drag their hideous images through the brain to spoil their rest and leave ugly autographs in the face. The result is that they get up in the morning refreshed, rejuvenated, with all the spontaneity of their youth."

5. A hospitable mental outlook helps the nerves to get out of ruts and makes your life longer. Do we realize that in this philosophy of life and in this cultivation of an alert mental atmosphere is something of the power of the very fountain of youth? When Solon, the Athenian sage, was asked the

secret of his strength and youth, he replied that it was "learning something new every day." This belief was general among the ancient Greeks—that the secret of eternal youth was "to be always learning something new." There is a basis of truth in the idea. Says a well known physician: "It is healthful activity that strengthens and preserves the mind as well as the body, and gives it youthful quickness and activity. So, if you would be young, in spite of the years, you must remain receptive to new thought, and must grow broader in spirit, wider in sympathy and more and more open to fresh revelations of truth as you travel further on the road of life."

6. It is worth while to cultivate calmness and serenity as a fine art. "It is a great aid to the preservation of youth and vigor," says Prentice Mulford, "to be able to sit still and keep still in mind as well as in body when there is really nothing to do, because in such condition, mind and body are recuperating and filling up with new force. Do you realize that the body is not fed with material food alone? There are other elements, often unrecognized, which act upon it and give it strength, and the grand source and means of receiving these

## INSPIRATION OF OUTLOOK III

lie partly in that mental and physical quietude of mind which acts only when it has full power to act. If wisdom guides action, either by brain or hand, a great deal more is accomplished and a balance of life's forces is kept in reserve." Do you remember what the genial doctor, Oliver Wendell Holmes, said' was the secret of his marvelous youthfulness in his eightieth year? "It is due chiefly to a cheerful disposition and invariable contentment in every period of my life, with what I was. I never felt the pangs of ambition, discontent, and disquietude that makes us grow old prematurely by carving wrinkles on our faces. Wrinkles do not appear on faces that have constantly smiled. Smiling is the best possible massage. Contentment is the fountain of youth."

This trained mental outlook, therefore, is a part of the suggestion for the re-education of the nerves. In serious cases, seek a wise physician who uses both physical and psychic treatment. In milder cases, try for yourself the deliberate cultivation of cheerfulness, courage, and the great affirmations of confidence and optimism. These things will have their reaction on body—on sleep, on nerves, and on length of years.

Forel gives two excellent suggestions for

mental hygiene equally applicable to a patient passing through any nervous disorder, or to anyone desiring to keep good nervous poise. He says: "Then let the steady compass of our unswerving optimism be: Ever forward to a large-hearted ideal; never look back!" His second suggestion is "to pay as little attention as possible to functional nervous troubles and disturbances so as not to cultivate them by habit."

7. Nor must we neglect this great fact. The therapeutic value of love cannot be overestimated. As one says: "Evil thought and hateful feeling is banished by it from the mind. It tranquillizes, calms, and yet energizes the entire nature. It kindles the enthusiasm of all healthy affection and emotions. It gives a secret power that brings back and helps to maintain abounding health and unalloyed happiness. Every nerve, every muscle, every organ, feels its life-giving influence. The God of love fills His earthly temple with His hallowed presence as surely as He will fill the temple of humanity with His glory when love shall reign supreme."

Attention may be called to the fact that Ruskin dwells upon love as "the source of unity

in Art, and as intimately connected with vital beauty. Through it the loveliest things are wrought. The ideal form can be reached by it alone." Leo Tolstoi strikes a fundamental note when he says: "One may deal with things without love, one may cut down trees, make bricks, and hammer iron without love, but you cannot deal with men without love."

Bishop Fallows notes that "Thomas à Kempis derived all good from love, and all evil from the opposite. He declares in his Pauline eulogy on love, 'It gives all for all, possesses all in all, because it reposes in the One Supreme Good, from which every good originates and flows.' Love is not opposed to knowledge; it is blended with it, even as it is united with faith. Reason and love ought never to come into conflict, for it would be like a house divided against itself. Let love be guided by reason and penetrated with knowledge, then will come the reconciliation of all the contradictions of life, and the harmony of mankind."

There is the remarkable case of Helen Keller, bound by physical limitations that seemed at first utterly hopeless, shut in to a world where no light nor sound ever penetrates,

who has yet made such a magnificent triumph of her life that her words about joy, whose handmaid is cheerfulness, carry peculiar conviction. "Join the great company," she says, "of those who make the barren places of life fruitful with kindness. Carry a vision of heaven in your souls, and you shall make your home, your college, the world, correspond to that vision. Your success and happiness lie in you. External conditions are the accidents of life, its outer trappings. The great enduring realities are love and service. Joy is the holy fire that keeps our purpose warm and our intelligence aglow. Resolve to keep happy, and your joy and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties."

Now in all this, mental factors count for a great deal. But a more important factor than the merely mental is needed. The situation demands the fullest help, the divine and infinite background of the spiritual fellowship and power. Our chief work, if we are able, is to create a spiritual atmosphere. For this will have emphatic reaction on the physical.

1. We may remember that there is a distinct therapeutic value in a simple faith in

God. Perfect confidence in God, the rest of faith, the peace that passeth understanding, are the old phrases, which are coming to have a fuller meaning in these days.

Do you remember the word that kept the great Gladstone serene in the midst of his wearing life and heavy responsibilities? When the great burdens of his office as prime minister of England were heaviest upon him, and someone spoke to him, wondering how he could stand the terrific strain, he told the secret when he said that at the foot of his bed where he could see it when he retired, and when he rose up in the morning, were the words, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." Many people ought to have that verse in letters of gold where they could see it night and morning. It would put a new spirit into their lives.

As Phillips Brooks says: "Quiet has come in place of the noise; repose instead of action. . . . Some day the headlong current of your life was stopped. The river ceased to flow. The waves stood still, and then the ocean, which the flowing of the river had kept out, poured up and in, and there were sacreder emotions in the old channels, and

deeper hopes and fears were beaten upon the well-worn banks. The day when your deep bereavement came, . . . the day when joy, with that subtle possibility of deep pain which is always in her eyes, came to your door and knocked, . . . the day when, being weak and ill, you did not go to your business, . . . these were the days when God was feeding you. . . . No life is complete which does not sometimes sit trustfully waiting to be fed of God."

Let me quote a letter recently received which gives a fine illustration of this process of mental and spiritual education.

It reads in part: "There came a time, after three serious illnesses, when family sorrow and responsibilities completely overtaxed me physically and mentally. I not only felt unable to go on living, but I really think my wise physician felt that I might not live if something were not done. It was then I began to seek, by God's aid, for that diviner self, which I had lost, the true and eternal 'I,' which not only could lay hold of truth, but which could detach itself utterly from the sad, weary and over-burdened individual who could not see her way to go on living. Gradually, after many failures, my conscious-



ness of this diviner self grew stronger, recollections of old symptoms of illness became effaced from my brain and nerves, daily cares and trials ceased to affect me; my mind felt free and eager for the first time in a year to seek new truth and enjoy new beauty. And strangest of all, my strength, digestion and sleep are returning steadily. Of course I give full credit to the doctor who cured me of serious illnesses, but it was he also who urged me to a total change of thought to complete the cure."

2. Do you know that ancient but effective method, called "the practice of the presence of God?" It also has therapeutic value and is a distinct nerve tonic, as well as a life tonic.

This fine phrase of Jeremy Taylor's that haunts the soul with a continual surprise and delight is the heart of his book on "Holy Living." The book itself is an astonishment. It is so opulent in its learning, so brilliant in its phrasing, so spiritual in its feeling, and so absolutely practical in its definite counselings. It is wise in worldly wisdom, it has a flavor of colleges and king's courts and yet there is heavenly light on every page, and the pervading benediction of a splendid relig-

ious sanity. Jeremy Taylor is rightly called the Shakespeare of divines and the Chrysostom of the English Church, and his book is, "a part of that larger Bible which is the record of the deepest experiences of the most spiritual, and, therefore, the most Christian, souls of all the ages."

Says the good bishop: "We may imagine God to be in the air and the sea, and we all enclosed in His circle, wrapt up in the lap of this infinite nature. We can no more be removed from the presence of God than from our own being."

This is the general proposition which is but a phrasing of the great 139th Psalm, "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit or whither shall I flee from Thy Presence?" Or of Paul to the Athenians: "In Him we live and move and have our being."

All of us readily admit the theory of the presence of God. It is all true, we say, and the next moment we forget it, and act as if God were far off in the infinitudes. How can we make theory into practice, how can we have God's presence so vivid and real to us as shall make it a perpetual and transforming power?

This realization of God is our own per-

sonal problem. It is the key to the art of living well, and being well. As one has rightly said, "He who realizes God will use his time aright, will have purity of motive, will be clean in thought and act, and will make his body and mind fit to be the sanctuary of the divine. . . . He who realizes God will be afraid of nothing on the earth except failing to do His will and of nothing beyond the earth except the hiding of His face."

We remember God at times and all of us realize in some measure the presence of God, but only at rare times and moments. How can we continually remember and realize God so that we shall always rejoice in Him and that He shall be continually our life and health?

If it is possible, are there any rules to compass it? Or can it be accomplished only by a great, overmastering love for God? Jeremy Taylor believed in rules as well as in love, and he gives us ten definite rules for accomplishing it in the book that we have mentioned.

Shall we venture to remind ourselves of these rules in the briefest way.

1. His first rule: Let this actual thought often return: God is omnipotent, filling

every place. "God is here." The frequent repetition of this thought will help to bring to the soul the sense of God's presence. We want the spiritual consciousness saturated with the divine reality.

2. Second rule: Solemnly worship God, place thyself in God's presence, behold Him with the eye of faith, let thy desires actually fix on Him. It is not only, "Thou God, seest me," but also "O God! I see Thee!"

3. Third rule: Let everything you see represent to you God's presence. . . . In the face of the sun you may see God's beauty; in the fire you may feel His heart warming; in the water, His gentleness to refresh you; it is the dew of heaven that makes your field give you bread and ministers drink to your necessities. This is antique imagery, but singularly suggestive. It is the spirit of the higher pantheism to which Saint Francis of Assisi gives utterance in his childlike yet majestic "Hymn of the Creatures."

4. Fourth rule: Make frequent ~~short~~ discourses between God and thy own soul. This will make Him present to thy spirit and to thy necessity. This was long since called by a spiritual person "A building to God a chapel in our breast." For thus in the midst

of your work, you may retire into your chapel—your heart—and converse with God.

5. Fifth rule: "Express thyself constantly, sensible of God by a spirit of love and reverence toward Him." God is present by His power, He calls for reverence; He is present to Thee in Thy needs and relieves them; He deserves Thy love.

6. Sixth rule: "Remember God is in us, we are in Him." We are in His actual presence by His indwelling within us, and by our partaking of His divine nature. Let this thought make Him real to us. It is the spirit of Novalis, "Whoso toucheth my flesh, toucheth God."

7. Seventh rule: "God is in thy brother. Refresh Him when he needs it." Thou givest to thy brother, thou givest to God, for He is thy brother. This is the ancient word of Christ and this the modern parable of Sir Launfal.

8. Eighth rule: "Everywhere let your deportment be as if in a holy place," or on holy ground, for God is there. God is in this place though I may know it not . . . this is a gate of heaven.

9. Ninth rule: "Remember that God is in every creature. Be cruel toward none."

Be kind toward all, for it is God who is in all by His presence. Almost there seems here the exquisite sense of sanctity of the Buddhists, and the closing lesson of the rhyme of the Ancient Mariner.

10. Tenth rule: "Companion thyself with God. . . . Converse with Him, run to Him in all thy necessities; ask counsel of Him in all thy doubtings; weep before Him for thy sins; fear Him as a judge, reverence Him as a lord, obey Him as a father, love Him . . . as the espoused loves his betrothed."

These are the Ten Rules for the practice of the presence of God, and the rules are supplemented by a number of excellent prayers to be used in furtherance of the practice.

Notice in all these rules that the way of realization is not when we minimize self; not in the ascetic sense of effacing personality and nullifying will, but in the sense of finding the larger life, by forgetting self and remembering God.

Tolstoi is correct, as Dr. MacDonald remarks, when he said the cause of all our ills is that men have lost their sense of God. That is why we rush at our brother's throat;

that is why we struggle and compete, and claw and cheat, and lose our life more and more with every futile attempt to save it. Yes, and that is the cause of our sorrows, our sicknesses and our despair. We have refused to believe that God is with us and that we are spirits as infinite as is He; and that because spirit with spirit can meet, the very joy of heaven is at our door waiting to be brought up into our consciousness and made the working principle of existence.

Such great truths—when we meditate upon them often, repeat them over and over again until we live with them and they become a part of us—cannot fail to bring a more joyous and confident mind and spirit, and react most helpfully and hopefully on the whole life—spiritually, mentally, even physically.

Such things we must emphasize.

We need to make it our habit to realize the presence of God, of the omnipresence of His goodness, His wisdom, His love and His power with us. We need to keep constantly before us in all our daily life, the remembrance that it is in God that we live and move and have our being. We need to speak frequently to all the troubles, disturbances

and worries of life, "In the name of Christ, peace, be still!"

Then from words we can go to facts. For it is actual fact that God is within us; we can be one with Him. We can possess the divine presence; it possesses us. We can come into fuller and fuller realization that the transcendent God is also an immanent God in the depths of the life. We can learn in prayer and communion to withdraw from the consciousness of the morbid and painful, at least for some quiet hours in the midst of the day—withdraw into the consciousness of the divine and eternal. Just as one can forget pain in a great joy, or forget time and place in an absorbing story, or forget all as the eyes close and sleep comes—so can we sink into God in restfulness and peace, and awake to new strength and health.

Is this mysticism? It is also practicality. It is not a life of mere passivity and acquiescence, but of positiveness and action. It means incitement toward strongest personality. It is letting God work through you to the fullest. It is asserting independence in spiritual things under the leadership of the Spirit. It is standing on one's feet with



God and emphasizing the reality and supremacy of the spiritual in life. It is facing all the circumstances of life with the cry, "I conquer in Christ. I can do all things through Him." It is being grateful for the stimulus of hardness and attack. It is meeting trials, troubles, suffering and sadness—and searching their very depths until the heart of blessing in them is found. It is living in the turmoils and struggles and battles of life with the deep hidden serenity of God at the heart, like the calm in the deep ocean caves though the upper surface be storm. It is making the very best of life. The conditions of life may be hard, hostile and harassing. But what of it? We can never reach our ideal conditions. We must realize that where we are and in our present conditions, life's discipline must be endured and conquered and life's divinest lessons learned.

Such things as these we must emphasize. God is near us now and here, as if we were with Him in Heaven.

The Almighty is right here—in us—abounding, infinite in His wisdom and love and power for us. The power of the Almighty is for us and for our using. Just

as much as we can use worthily and well, not for ecstasy, not for display, but for spiritual service—so much is God eager and willing to give us. It is ours if we will be filled with all the fullness of God.

We must emphasize above all, what is the vital center of life. Shall we dwell in the trivialities of self, of fears and doubts and weakness, and frailties and sickness, of things that are accidental, temporary, that perish with the using—shall we make these the all-important things of life? Or shall we dwell on the eternal things—of truth, of character, of God and His love, and His promises, and holiness and health? Once it was thought that this earth was the center of the universe and all things else revolved around it. The universe was geo-centric. That was Ptolamaic astronomy. But we have learned better since Copernicus, and it is seen that some distant sun is the center and all revolves around it. The universe, as we know it, is helio-centric.

Perchance we have been making our own little selves too much the center of our thought, care, interest, religion. We have lost power and peace. God calls us to let our lives be not self-centered. He wants

our thought, love, interests, hopes, all to revolve around the Son of God. In Him is holiness and health.

Do we understand, and are we helping others to understand, what it means to live in an atmosphere of large inspiration? It comes by dwelling in the great affirmations of divine truth, the eternal verities of existence. And do we realize how such a divine atmosphere can remake the whole life, physical, as well as mental and moral?

The Master said, eighteen hundred years ago, "Have faith in God"; the Psalmist said a thousand years or more before that, "Hope thou in God." Implicit trust in God—believing love—is the true philosopher's stone that transmutes everything that it touches into gold, that takes these rough, bitter experiences of life and sees them full of the golden goodness of God. "Believing love!" It is the fabled maiden who goes forth weaving with a magic web. She snatches here and there the scattered skeins of this tangled universe and weaves them together as silken threads, into one glorious, harmonious garment of the goodness of God.

The only thing that makes serious and intelligent men live content and hopeful in the

midst of the mysterious and oftentimes bitter and perplexing providences of life, is this firm assurance, that behind this world and its mysteries there is One whose name is love, One who loves us heart to heart, One who is manifesting His love to us in a thousand ways. He is the clew of the maze; He is the center and heart of the world's life and purposes; His is the plan and consummation of that

“ . . . one far-off divine event,  
To which the whole creation moves.”







